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# The American Church History Series

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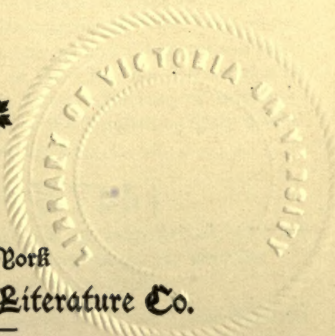
A HISTORY  
OF  
THE REFORMED CHURCH, DUTCH  
THE REFORMED CHURCH, GERMAN  
AND  
THE MORAVIAN CHURCH  
IN THE UNITED STATES

BY  
E. T. CORWIN, D. D.  
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AND  
PROFESSOR J. T. HAMILTON



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HISTORY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH, DUTCH.

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## PREFACE.

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THE Reformed Church in America is rich in material for history. . The limited space, however, allowed to this branch of the church in this American Church History Series has been a constant source of difficulty and regret. For more than half a century the Dutch Church was the only church on Manhattan Island and along the Hudson. Hence her early history covers a period of time not covered by that of any other religious body. But the ecclesiastical history of this period (1628-64), as well as that of the following period (1664-1708), has never yet been adequately elaborated in all its bearings, and with a due regard to all the circumstances and relations involved. Indeed, a general ecclesiastical history of this part of New York, down to the Revolution, is a desideratum. The writer has somewhat enlarged on the history of these two earlier periods as the foundation of the subsequent general history.

As the early French churches were at first more closely connected with the Dutch Church than with any other, the writer has also touched upon their history as occasion required.

The history of the attempt to secure a professor of divinity for the Dutch in King's College has also been somewhat expanded, as it excited intense interest at the time, and because the fact and the peculiar complications resulting therefrom are not generally known. But the his-



tory of the sad division in the Dutch Church known as the Coetus and Conferentie controversy, which resulted largely from the attempt to secure that professorship, having been sufficiently treated in chapter v. of the "Manual of the Reformed Church" (1879), and not being of general interest, has been dwelt on only briefly. So, also, it did not seem necessary, even if space had permitted, to elaborate on the history of the literary and theological institutions, as these have been amply treated in other works.

The Reformed Church in America has always taken special interest in foreign missions, and a chapter had been devoted to this theme; but the small allotment of space compelled the writer to cut this subject down to a mere outline, as well as the concluding chapter upon the Special Features and Relations of the church. The abridgment of this latter chapter could be the better done, however, because of the valuable work of Rev. Dr. David D. Demarest upon the "Origin, Development, and Characteristics of the Reformed Church in America" (1889), in which these topics are admirably presented. May this American Church History Series help all the different Christian bodies to understand one another better, and lead, through the unity of the Spirit, to closer coöperation in the great practical work of bringing our country and the world into the KINGDOM OF CHRIST!

## INTRODUCTION.

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### THE REFORMED CHURCH IN EUROPE—NAME AND ORIGIN.

THE Reformed Church is the technical name of that great division of Protestantism which had its rise in Switzerland in 1516 under Zwingli. It was contemporary with, but independent of, the Lutheran Reformation, and stands distinct from the Lutheran Church. It was subsequently more fully developed and organized under Calvin, with a distinct type of doctrine and a Presbyterian polity. While the name REFORMED was chiefly confined to churches on the Continent, it is well understood that this term also embraced Protestantism under all its forms in the British Isles. Cranmer gave doctrinal shape to English Protestantism in the Anglican communion in the days of Edward VI. (1547-53), being the principal compiler of the Thirty-nine Articles and the Prayer-book. The persecutions under Mary (1553-58) drove the best of the English Reformers to Switzerland, whence some of them brought back the principles which developed into Puritanism, while John Knox carried back to Scotland with him the principles of Presbyterianism.

### DOCTRINE.

The fundamental thought of the doctrine of the Reformed Church was the DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY, to which the proud human will must always bow subordinate. The

DOCTRINES OF GRACE, as they are called, were emphasized. These doctrines are exhibited in the confessions of faith of each country where the Reformed Church prevailed: in Switzerland in the Helvetic Confession; in France in the Gallican; in Holland in the Belgic; in England in the Seventeenth Article of the Thirty-nine Articles and in the Westminster Confession; and finally these doctrines were revised and formulated anew in the Canons of the Synod of Dort (1618-19) by representatives of all the churches above alluded to, besides some churches from other European states.

The doctrinal system of Calvin, as thus presented, was more or less modified at an early period by the so-called federal theology, which was first thoroughly formulated by Cocceius (1609-69). Witsius subsequently became its chief defender (1636-1708). Later modifications of the system of Calvin were attempted at the school of Saumur in France, by Fuller in England, and by Jonathan Edwards and others in America.

#### POLITY.

Calvin also brought order out of confusion by thoroughly formulating a Presbyterian polity of church government. He distinguished the extraordinary offices of the church in apostolic times from the ordinary in later times, and divided them into four classes, viz., ministers, teachers (or professors), elders, and deacons. Yet he did not insist on this as the only possible polity, nor was he inflexible as to the mode of election of these officers. So, also, the several grades of ecclesiastical bodies which he proposed, such as Consistories, Classes, local Synods, and a General Synod, were not necessarily binding, but were matters of expediency.

It is generally conceded that the faith of the Reformed



Church, as originally formulated, together with its Presbyterian polity, did more for the development of modern civilization, including republican institutions, than any other system.

#### DOCTRINE OF THE SUPPER AND SEPARATION OF THE LUTHERAN AND REFORMED.

In the doctrine of the Lord's Supper Calvin also modified Zwingli's views. The great colloquy at Marburg (1529) for the purpose of consolidating the Swiss and German Reformations, including as it did the discussion of the doctrine of the Supper, has left a deep impress, even to this day, upon Protestantism. Then began the real separation of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, as they subsequently came to be called. Luther held to the more literal interpretation of the words, "This is my body," and was unyielding, while Zwingli held to what seemed to him the only rational meaning of the words—that the bread and wine *represented* the body and blood of Christ, and that the Supper was therefore chiefly a memorial: "This do in remembrance of me." Subsequently Calvin, while holding the memorial view, emphasized the fact of the spiritual presence of Christ at the Supper, and that he was spiritually received by the spiritual and believing worshiper. It was chiefly on these differences about the Supper that the Lutheran and Reformed Churches separated.

#### HISTORY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH—SWITZERLAND.

Zwingli was soon cut off in battle (1531), but not before a large proportion of the German cantons of Switzerland had embraced the Reformed faith. The good work was further carried on in that land by the irenic Œcolampadius and the intrepid and eloquent Farel, and, as already in-

timated, by Calvin, learned and severe, but possessed of almost unequalled executive ability. He came a refugee from France in 1536, the same year in which he published his "Institutes of the Christian Religion." The judicious labors of Bullinger, also (1504-75), in guiding the infant church, and his remarkable influence upon the English refugees while in Switzerland, ought not to be forgotten; nor the learning, wit, and eloquence of Beza (1519-1605). His translation of the New Testament into Latin left its distinct impress upon King James's version of our English Bible.

#### GERMANY.

From Switzerland the Reformed faith passed over into the Palatinate, in the days of Frederick III., and was joyfully received. Here the Reformed Church of Germany was born. Here the Heidelberg Catechism, which has exerted an almost unequalled influence upon Protestantism, was written by Ursinus and Olevianus in 1563. This catechism was also adopted at an early period by the Church of Scotland as one of its symbolical books.

From the Palatinate the Reformed Church extended northward, finding a congenial soil in many of the German states, and quickly penetrated as far as Bremen. It also extended into Bohemia, Poland, Spain, and Italy, but in these countries it was soon destroyed by persecution.

#### FRANCE.

In France it met with great opposition, and many of its earlier adherents were forced to leave the country. Nevertheless its success was so great that a Protestant Synod was held at Paris in 1559, representing more than two thousand congregations. This Synod revised and approved the original confession of Calvin. Beza presented it in 1561

to Charles IX. at Poissy, where he pleaded earnestly for evangelical truth, and made a deep impression. It was soon published as the creed of the French Reformed Church, and is known as the Gallican Confession. It was amended at the Synod of Rochelle in 1571, and is sometimes styled the Confession of Rochelle. It was at this colloquy at Poissy that the distinctive name THE REFORMED CHURCH originated. It was the old apostolical church, freed from the errors and superstitions which had attached themselves to it, and now restored to its primitive purity and excellence. This is the old historic name, far nobler and broader than names which simply refer to a form of polity or to an individual Reformer. But in 1572 occurred the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, which caused the death of at least twenty thousand Protestants. But truth again took courage of despair. In the war which ensued they obtained remarkably favorable terms, which prepared the way for the Edict of Nantes (1598), by which they secured almost unlimited toleration. For eighty-seven years this edict remained in force (1598-1685), and this period represents the halcyon days of the Reformed Church of France. Great preachers adorned the Protestant pulpits, such as Jean Daillé, Saurin, Du Bosc, and Claude. Protestant schools were established everywhere, with thirty colleges and eight universities, of which the most celebrated was that at Saumur. The twenty-ninth and last General Synod was held in 1659. The Edict of Nantes was not revoked until 1685, although the French Protestants, a million in number, had been much annoyed and hampered for many years before. The total number of fugitives before and after the Revocation was at least a half million. They were hospitably received in all the neighboring countries, which they enriched with their arts and character. Multitudes of them came to America.



## THE NETHERLANDS.

In the Netherlands the Reformation met with a most hearty welcome. Entering from Germany, it afterward received its chief impetus from Switzerland and France; hence its distinctive type of the Reformed doctrine and more democratic polity. But here, as elsewhere, there had been a great preparation made by reformers before the Reformation. Gerard Groot (1340-84) had made a deep impression by his eloquence and enthusiasm. He taught that religion was a matter of the heart, and not dependent on priest and ceremony. He founded in 1382 the community known as the Brotherhood of the Common Life. The members lived together for the study of the Scriptures and the cultivation of practical piety. They used the vernacular tongue in reading the Bible, as well as in preaching and prayer. Indeed, the Bible had been translated into Dutch as early as 1477, and many editions were published. These brethren gained their livelihood by manual labor, by the transcription of books, and especially by teaching. They were not allowed to beg. This fact placed them in striking contrast with all the orders of monks. They were very popular throughout the land. Their schools became famous. From them came some of the best teachers in Europe, and also such men as Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471), who wrote "The Imitation of Christ," a book even now published by Protestants; Wessel Gansevoort and Rudolph Agricola, with their evangelical teaching and preaching fifty years before Luther; and Erasmus (1465-1536), the father of biblical criticism. He refused to take monkish vows, and gave to the world in 1516 a new edition of the Greek Testament, with a purer text than had existed before, as well as an elegant Latin version of the same. Indeed, the graduates of the schools of this brother-



hood became the heroes of the Reformation in the Netherlands.

We can only allude to the Anabaptists. While some of them were wild and extravagant fanatics, others were sweet evangelical Christians, who suffered not a little for the truth as they understood it. Others were mystics in their views. Menno Simons, a converted priest (1492-1559), joined them in 1535, and was a power for good among them. While undoubtedly defective in some of their doctrinal views, yet they emphasized the work of the Spirit upon the heart. They settled all differences by arbitration, and insisted on the strictest morality. They stood for civil and religious liberty, and advocated a separation of church and state. They were an important factor in the Reformation in Holland. The desire of some of their children to join the Reformed Church was the immediate occasion of the preparation of a Form for Adult Baptism, in 1604. In many respects they resembled the Society of Friends in England.

#### MARTYRS AND EXILES.

Now Charles V. (1519-55), and his son, Philip II. (1555-81), foolishly thought that they could turn back this great tide of reform and extirpate heresy. Edicts denouncing heretics, and condemning them to torture and execution, were issued frequently during a generation (1520-50). The monks, John Esch and Henry Voes, for their evangelical teaching, were burned at Brussels as early as 1523, and were perhaps the first martyrs of the Reformation. Pistorius suffered the same fate two years later, and uncounted persecutions and torturings and martyrdoms followed. But the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church. It would seem that scores of converts must have sprung up for every martyr. Many fled to escape the

cruel edicts. Not a few went to England, where as early as 1546 Edward VI. gave them the spacious church of Austin Friars in London, which is used by the Dutch to this day. Protests were made by Orange, Egmont, and Hoorn against the violence of the government, which led to the displacement of Cardinal Granvella (1564), one of the principal instruments of the persecutions. Meanwhile the Council of Trent had been in session (1545-63), and had issued its decrees against heretics. Philip now, with blind fatality, determined to enforce these decrees. It was this step which led to the beginning of organized resistance, the humiliation of Spain, and all the glories of the Dutch Republic.

In 1565 a covenant was entered into by a few patriots at Brussels to resist the Spanish yoke and the introduction of the Inquisition. The following year four hundred nobles went on foot to the court of the regent, Margaret of Parma, a natural daughter of Charles V., and earnestly petitioned for protection from persecution, and for religious toleration. One of the councilors referred to the petitioners, coming as they did on foot, as a troop of beggars. The phrase was overheard, and at a banquet that evening it was eagerly adopted by the young nobles as a party name—*Les Gueux*. A league was formed called the League of Beggars, and the term became a rallying-cry of great power. Orange, Egmont, and Hoorn, though they had at first stood aloof, dropped in at the banquet of the nobles and drank health to "The Beggars." As if by a common instinct, the people everywhere accepted of the title, and wore medals to indicate their position. Delegations were sent to Philip to ask for relief, but they accomplished nothing. Field-preaching now, under the protection of armed men, did much to evangelize the people and inspire them to resist oppression. Herman Stryker and John Arentsen

were among the first of these field-preachers, and the practice soon spread all over the land. The hymns of Beza and Marot were also of great service, not only for devotion, but for instruction, and in exciting enthusiasm. The people soon rose in their might, and the churches throughout the land were quickly shorn of the symbols of superstition and idolatry. Monasteries and nunneries were destroyed. The church buildings were whitewashed to indicate their purification, and preaching and simple devotions took the place of ceremonialism. The *Lily among Thorns* became the emblem of the church.

Philip now resolved utterly to extirpate heresy at all hazards. The Duke of Alva came into the country with twenty thousand mercenary troops, and a work of carnage and martyrdom, on a scale perhaps unequaled, was begun. Alva was made regent. During six years (1567-73) one hundred thousand men lost their lives. He established a Council on Disturbances to ferret out heretics. The people called it the Council of Blood. Death was decreed against every one tainted in the slightest degree with heresy. It was at this time that Egmont and Hoorn lost their lives. Myriads of the best citizens fled the country. They went to Germany, Denmark, and especially to England. Eight Dutch churches soon sprang up in London, not to speak of others in many other places. Not a few of the refugees Anglicized their names, and their descendants were found among the Independents in England, and some of them ultimately came to New England. England was greatly benefited by the useful arts which they introduced.

#### DELIVERANCE.

But deliverance was near at hand. William of Orange (1533-84) was raised up by Providence to save the nation



and make it a shining example to all future time of perseverance in a good cause unto victory. William had been honored by many offices of trust. He had listened in silence to Henry II., who had told him of a plot to destroy all Protestants in France and the Netherlands; hence his surname of "the Silent." But he was horrified at the recital. And now with the arrival of Alva he could no longer conscientiously remain in the service of Philip. He retired to Germany and became a Protestant. He was outlawed, but ultimately raised an army, and was more than a match for Philip. He fought the Spaniards not only by land but by sea, and took some rich prizes. In 1572 the "water-beggars" took Briel, and this was the turning of the tide. After the siege of Harlem, which cost Alva twelve thousand of his troops, together with the mutinies which followed, Alva was glad to seek recall from the country in 1573. With the siege of Leyden (1574) the Spanish efforts were further frustrated. Orange was soon able to enter upon a series of negotiations which resulted in the Pacification of Ghent (1576), in which the seventeen provinces bound themselves together to drive out the Spaniards and to establish freedom of religion. Many intrigues followed. The southern provinces withdrew from the compact, leaving Belgium Roman Catholic. The Protestants of that country now fled to Holland, and are known as Walloons—of whom more in a subsequent chapter. In 1579 was signed the UNION OF UTRECHT, consisting of the seven northern provinces, and this union became the foundation of the Dutch Republic. They adopted as their motto, *Eendracht maakt macht*—"a united pull gives power," or "union makes strength." This ought now to be made the motto of Protestantism in the federation of all evangelical churches. In 1581 the States-General or senate of Holland deposed Philip as unworthy to



be recognized any longer as their king, and issued their Declaration of Independence. In this they declare that a prince is appointed by God to defend and preserve his subjects, and not to oppress and persecute and murder them; that the subjects were not created for the sake of the prince, to obey him whatever might be his character, but that the prince was made for the subjects, to govern them justly and be a father unto them; that if he does not act thus, he is a tyrant, and ought no longer to be recognized, and another should be chosen in his place. Hence they declared that from necessity the king of Spain was *ipso jure* deposed from his sovereignty over the Low Countries, and they would no longer use his name or permit others to use it as their sovereign.

#### THE DUTCH REPUBLIC.

Thus arose the Dutch Republic. The wonders of her career cannot here be described—her constitution; her wars; her diplomacy; her universities, scholars, and divines; her power on the sea; her great commercial companies; her colonies in Asia, Africa, and America; her riches; her toleration of all sects; her welcome to the Pilgrims and other dissenters from the British Isles. The war, of course, went on, with periods of truce; but it was not until 1648, at the Peace of Westphalia, after an eighty years' war, that the political rights of all the Reformed princes and churches of the Continent were secured by treaty.

#### LITURGIES.

During the troublous times before independence, liturgies were growing up, containing purified forms of devotion, and these were also full of instruction to the common people. In their composition all the older liturgies, even

to the earliest centuries, were freely used. Errors and superstitions which had attached themselves to them were, of course, eliminated. These liturgies, as they appeared, were translated from one language to another, with improvements, until they approximated the Reformed ideal. Besides an earlier one in Geneva, Calvin prepared a liturgy for his Walloon congregation at Strassburg in 1541, which was printed in 1545. A second edition was published in 1546 by Polanus, Calvin's successor. Upon the removal of Polanus with his entire flock to Glastonbury, England, in 1551, he translated this liturgy into English, which Cranmer and his colleagues used in the preparation of the Book of Common Prayer. In 1553 John à Lasco, pastor of the Dutch Church of Austin Friars, London, prepared a liturgy in Latin, based on that of Polanus. An abridgment of this was made by Micron in 1554, translated into Dutch, and printed at Embden under the title, "Christian Ordinances of the Netherlands Congregations of Christ, with the approbation of the ministers and elders of the Neder Dutch church of Christ at London, for the comfort and profit of all believers. Diligently collected and arranged by Martin Micron." The next year a Latin edition of à Lasco's liturgy of 1553 was published at Frankfort under the title, "The Form of Ecclesiastical Service in the Dutch Church of Foreigners established at London in England." In 1566 Dathenus revised the liturgy of Micron, and this revision was formally adopted in Holland by the Synod of Wesel in 1568. This also contained Dathenus's versification of the Psalms and the Heidelberg Catechism. Forms for the administration of baptism to infants, Micron's Compendium for those who wished to enter into the full communion of the church, forms for the administration of the Lord's Supper, and for marriage, with many forms of prayer, were also incorporated. This

revised liturgy of Dathenus was formally adopted by the Synods of Holland and Zeeland in 1574, and soon came into more or less general use in all the provinces. The prayers in these liturgies were not obligatory. Thus during the generation of greatest persecution were these believers preparing forms of worship which would exert an educational influence for generations.

#### CREEDS AND POLITY.

Meantime, also, they felt the necessity of providing themselves with a definite creed and church order, or system of polity. Congregations, more or less imperfectly organized, had sprung up everywhere. Many minor differences in faith and order needed to be adjusted. Guido de Bres, Peter Dathenus, Henry Modet, and Francis Junius were the principal instruments in securing the unity desired. After a few concessions wrung from the regent Margaret in 1566, some Walloon and Dutch pastors felt encouraged to meet at Antwerp, with a number of nobles, to begin the formation of a regular church organization. After slight revision they adopted the Belgic Confession of Faith, which had been composed by Guido de Bres in 1559, and published in 1561. It was modeled after the Gallican Confession, and contained thirty-seven articles. A copy was sent to Philip II., with an explanatory letter, and also with a request for protection and liberty of conscience. At the same time an exhortation was addressed to the several local authorities of the Netherlands. The Heidelberg Catechism was provisionally adopted at the same time. The Synod, however, was careful to say that these standards of doctrine were only symbols of agreement, and that the WORD OF GOD was their only rule of faith.

Such was the formal beginning of the Reformed Church



in the Netherlands, although the principles of the same faith, and ever-increasing numbers of adherents, had existed for nearly half a century, not to speak of similar believers before the Reformation.

#### EXTERRITORIAL SYNODS—THE SYNOD OF WESEL.

The two Synods which formulated the Church Order, as the polity of the church was called, were obliged to meet outside the Netherlands, on account of the raging persecutions within. It was during the atrocities of Alva (1567-73), who had sworn to exterminate the heretics, that the Dutch proceeded to organize their church, not doubting, in their new-found evangelical faith, but that God would give them victory and peace. This Synod of Wesel (1568) accordingly adopted the name "The Netherland Churches which are Waiting under the Cross." It also adopted provisionally Calvin's Presbyterian polity, which they elaborated in certain particulars to suit their circumstances. Ministers must be pious and learned men, and must agree in doctrine with the standards already adopted. Schools must be established for the study of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. The Walloon churches could use the Geneva Catechism. The Dutch versification of the Psalms by Dathenus was adopted for use in worship. The duties of the four classes of officers were defined, and directions were given as to sermonizing, and prophesying, that is, Bible-class teaching. They refused to give *minute* directions as to the way of administering baptism and the Supper, lest they should seem to tyrannize over consciences.

#### THE SYNOD OF EMBDEN.

At the Synod of Embden (1571) the action of the Synod of Wesel was confirmed, and some additions were made.



Ministers must subscribe to the standards of doctrine. The name "consistory" was adopted for the minister, elders, and deacons<sup>1</sup> of each church, who must hold weekly meetings. The Classes were to meet quarterly or semi-annually, and a biennial General Synod was suggested, which should be conventional. Ministers were to be called by the Consistory, subject to the approval of the Classis. These features of church government, more or less expanded, remain the same in the Reformed Church in America to this day.

With the recall of the Duke of Alva to Spain (1573) the fugitives were enabled to return. A Synod embracing only the two provinces of Holland and Zeeland was held in 1574, which was somewhat retrogressive, owing to local and personal reasons, and its acts were not recognized by the States. Following the siege of Leyden the University of Leyden was founded in 1575 in reward of the heroism of the citizens. In 1576 the Reformed Church was established in the provinces of Zeeland and Holland, but freedom of religion was allowed in all the provinces. This was the result of the Pacification of Ghent. The infamous edicts of Charles V. were now repealed, and the Inquisition was forever prohibited.

#### SYNODS IN HOLLAND—THE FIRST SYNOD OF DORT.

With two national Synods which were subsequently held in the country—viz., at Dort (1576) and at Middelburg (1581)—the polity of the Reformed Church of Holland was completed. The first of these Synods was called without the consent of the civil power. It declared that in ecclesiastical matters the power belonged to the church

<sup>1</sup> Subsequently the term was limited to the minister and elders, but in America it has always also included the deacons.

alone. It was subsequently conceded that calls on ministers might be approved by the magistrates. The four grades of ecclesiastical bodies were defined, viz., Consistories, Classes, Provincial Synods, and a General Synod which was to meet triennially. Church records were to be minutely kept, as well as records of baptisms and marriages. The conditions of full church-membership were defined.

#### THE SYNOD OF MIDDELBURG.

The Synod of Middelburg (1581) invited the States to send a delegation, but this was declined. This excited some suspicions. This Synod decided that the States should not be recognized in the election of ministers, elders, or deacons. A proposition was made for some sort of civic superintendence, but this was rejected. It was now decided that all church officers, including professors of theology and schoolmasters, must sign the standards of doctrine. The Reformed Church of Holland was now (1581) thoroughly organized, with an evangelical liturgy and creed, and a Presbyterian polity. Within a month after the adjournment of this Synod, as before said, Philip II. was formally deposed.

#### THE ARMINIAN CONTROVERSY AND THE SYNOD OF DORT.

To pass over the intervening period, in 1609 began a truce of twelve years with Spain. In the same year began the great Arminian controversy, which led to the call of the famous Synod of Dort (1618-19). Arminius (1560-1609) was ordained as a Reformed minister in 1586. In 1603 he became professor of theology at Leyden. He soon became involved in a dispute with Gomar on fore-

ordination. He asked for the assembling of a Synod to decide the questions involved, but he almost immediately died. His adherents, as ministers of the Reformed Church, were condemned for holding opinions contrary to the standards of doctrine which they had subscribed. In 1610 they presented a remonstrance against this decision, and hence were called Remonstrants. The debate went on for ten years. The Remonstrants held to a conditional election; an unlimited atonement, yet that no man of himself is able to exercise saving faith, except through the power of the Holy Spirit; and that grace does not act upon men in an irresistible way. Upon the perseverance of the saints they were undetermined. All the Reformed churches of Europe were invited to send delegates to this Synod, and they all complied except Anhalt. Those of the French church were forbidden to attend by the king. James I. of England sent Carleton, Bishop of Llandaff; Davenant, afterward Bishop of Salisbury; Samuel Ward, professor at Cambridge; Joseph Hall, afterward Bishop of Exeter and Norwich; and Walter Balcanqual, chaplain to the king. Twenty-three delegates came from Germany, the Palatinate, and Switzerland. There were thirty-one Dutch ministers present, twenty elders, and five professors. The Arminians were cited as accused parties. Their leader, Episcopius, defended their views with great eloquence and boldness. The doctrines of grace concerning predestination, redemption, the corruption of man and the manner of his conversion, and the perseverance of the saints were elaborately discussed, and more accurately defined and formulated in what are called the Canons of the Synod of Dort. The design of these Canons is TO MAGNIFY THE GRACE OF GOD in the salvation of sinners. The representatives of all the Reformed churches present signed the Canons. It was then decided that the Remonstrants, as

officers of the Reformed Church, should be excluded from their offices. They would, no doubt, have been tolerated as a separate sect.

Political complications were involved in the discussion, and the long dispute no doubt exasperated both parties; hence the added severity of the banishment of about two hundred ministers, including the great statesman and scholar, Hugo Grotius, and the execution of Barneveldt. But these events must be judged in the light of the seventeenth century. Within six years, with the death of Maurice (1625), the Remonstrants were permitted to return, and full toleration was granted them. Arminians are now found everywhere. As Wesleyans in Great Britain, and Methodists in America, though somewhat loose and uncertain in doctrine, and given to extremes in action, they have been most useful in advancing the kingdom of God, and the Reformed Church bids them Godspeed.

#### THE POST-ACTA. .

The Synod of Dort was in session for six months, and its proceedings are voluminous. After the withdrawal of the foreign delegates at the close of the one hundred and fifty-fourth session, the Dutch delegates continued in session as a National Synod. Its acts (Sessions 155-180) are known as the Post-Acta. They relate to a variety of topics,<sup>1</sup> such as church ordinances, the *jus patronatus*, church visitation, the call to the ministerial office, correspondence between magistrates and Consistories, festival days, the hymns to be sung in the church, the baptism of Roman Catholics, the observance of the Sabbath, the marriage relation, professors, the form to be signed at ordination, the baptism of the sick and of adults, the visitation

<sup>1</sup> Hansen's "Reformed Church in the Netherlands," p. 171.



of the sick, a new translation of the Bible into Dutch, foreign missions, profanity, ministers' salaries, the liturgy, and other matters.

The Heidelberg Catechism was reindorsed with words of praise, and parents were exhorted to teach it in the home. It was required to be taught in the schools. The establishment of more schools was urged. Ministers were required to explain a portion of the catechism every Sabbath afternoon. A compendium of the catechism prepared by Herman Faukelius was adopted in the place of that of Micron and others, which had formerly been used.

New forms had been added to the liturgy from time to time, and modifications had been made by different Synods. The revision of the liturgy was now intrusted to a committee, of which Festus Hommius, pastor at Leyden, was chairman. Their work was ratified by the Provincial Synods in 1622. The Articles of Church Government were also revised. They consist of eighty-six articles, which were treated under four heads, viz., Offices; Ecclesiastical Assemblies; Doctrines, Sacraments, and Usages; and Discipline. It was just at this juncture that the West India Company was formed (1621) and New Netherland began to be colonized.

Subsequent generations in Holland passed through many vicissitudes. The spread of rationalism in the eighteenth century affected many of her ministers, and the Napoleonic wars resulted in a modification of her polity; but in 1816 certain new regulations were adopted which partly restored her former system. Finally the Established Church gave up the Canons of Dort, and allowed as wide a latitude to her ministers and professors as Germany or Switzerland. Hence in 1834 a number of ministers and congregations separated from the Established Church and organized the CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH. Their design was to

secure and maintain the old purity of doctrine. After much difficulty, and not without persecution, they obtained recognition. In 1846 began a new emigration of Hollanders, chiefly from this body, to Michigan and other States. These now far exceed in numbers the original Holland settlers of 1664, from whom the Dutch Church has descended. A large portion of these recent immigrants have fallen naturally into the fold of the Reformed Church in America, which adheres to the original system of Reformed doctrine. Some have united with the True Reformed Dutch Church, a small body which seceded in 1822.

The present kingdom of the Netherlands, according to the constitution of 1848, grants entire liberty of conscience and complete civil equality to the members of all religious confessions. The National Reformed Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and English Presbyterian ministers in certain seaports are supported by the government. In 1857, under the influence of the liberals and the Romanists, the government banished religious instruction from the schools, and in 1876 it abolished the theological faculties in the universities, but granted funds to the National Synod for special theological instruction. When rationalists secured these professorships, the orthodox party within the National Church established a Free Reformed University at Amsterdam (1880). The same party has established free schools all over Holland, in which evangelical religion is taught.

PERIOD I.

THE REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA.  
COLONIZATION (1614-64).





# THE REFORMED CHURCH, DUTCH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### TRANSPLANTING THE REFORMED CHURCH TO AMERICA.

THE Reformed Church in America is the oldest body of Presbyterians on the western hemisphere. As the pioneer, therefore, of those doctrines and forms of government believed to be most in harmony with Scripture and the American Constitution, she occupies a unique place in our country's annals. The Reformed Church of Holland has the honor of having first planted Presbyterianism upon the shores of the New World.

Many adherents of the Reformed faith, led by various causes, early emigrated to America. Those from the Continent, while retaining the general epithet of Reformed, have, on account of the different nationalities from which they sprung, and out of love to their fatherlands, retained, until a generation ago, patril adjectives to indicate their origin; hence the Dutch Reformed, the French Reformed, and the German Reformed Churches. But these old national distinctions became comparatively meaningless in the general intermixture and Americanization of all the Reformed churches in this country. Scattered representatives of the Swiss Reformed, also, were not wanting. The

non-episcopal emigrants from Great Britain of the Reformed faith have generally been distinguished by names derived from their forms of church government, to indicate their opposition to Episcopacy, as Congregationalists and Presbyterians; but these and the continental branches have freely intermingled as location or other circumstances determined, thus giving a practical exhibition of the unity of the church. The French Reformed—the noble Huguenots—have been almost completely absorbed by other denominations which flourished around them. From 1730 to 1792 the German Reformed churches, mostly from the Palatinate, placed themselves under the care of the Classis of Amsterdam. Indeed, all the elements of the Reformed churches of the Continent, wherever located, were under the ecclesiastical care of that renowned Classis. French and German and Swiss, as well as Dutch, from all parts of the New World—from New Netherland, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia; from the West Indies, Guiana, and Brazil; and even from many parts of the Old World—from Cape Colony, Hindustan, and Ceylon; from the East India Islands, as Borneo and Java; from Formosa and Japan—turned to Amsterdam for men and money.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE REFORMED CHURCH COLONY IN NEW NETHERLAND.

The Dutch did not flee to America from oppression, as did the Puritans, for Holland was at this time the open asylum for the oppressed of all lands; but they came hither on great commercial errands. Their small fur-trade with the city of Archangel suggested the possibility

<sup>1</sup> The Archives of the Classis of Amsterdam contain more than a hundred folio volumes of their correspondence with all these fields.

of a vast trade of a similar kind with America. It was soon perceived that the peltry of the New World could be made a business immensely profitable. At first there was no intention of planting permanent agricultural colonies. Hudson, sailing under the auspices of the Dutch East India Company, in searching for a route to India, discovered in 1609 the river which bears his name. Hendrick Christiaensen made ten voyages to this river (1612-21), by virtue of a special grant. In 1614 the country between Virginia and New France, and extending on the sea-coast from the fortieth to the forty-fifth degree of latitude, was named NEW NETHERLAND, and the New Netherland Company was chartered to trade therewith. A few armed trading-posts were at once established along the Hudson River. These efforts, and other circumstances, such as the termination of the twelve years' truce with Spain, resulted in the organization of the West India Company.

For twenty years the Dutch East India Company had been trading in the Indian Ocean and on the shores of the Pacific. By its daring enterprise and success it built up a Dutch empire in Malaysia. By the floods of wealth which it brought back to Holland it excited the admiration of the world. And now a West India Company was chartered (1621) for the development of traffic with America, the humbling of Spain, the conversion of the Indians, and colonization in general. This company had, so far as the Dutch could give it, the monopoly of the Atlantic Ocean on all its uncivilized shores. It was an armed commercial corporation, possessing almost unlimited powers to colonize, defend, and govern its possessions. It planted colonies not only in New Netherland, but in South America, in the West Indies, and on the shores of Africa. The particular care of New Netherland was committed to the Amsterdam Chamber. By its instrumentality parts of our

Middle States were rapidly settled with emigrants from Holland. Among these Dutch were many Walloons, as they are called in English. Their original name was *Gal-lois*, because they bordered on France and spoke the old French; but the Dutch called them *Waalshes*, which was corrupted into Walloons. They inhabited the southern provinces of Belgium, which did not join in the Union of Utrecht (1579) because most of the people were Roman Catholics. The Protestants of these provinces, being persecuted, fled to Holland, and these are the Walloons of history. They carried with them many useful arts, and enriched their adopted country. They were allowed to retain their own modes of worship. The English Virginia Company failed to offer acceptable terms to them. The West India Company was more fortunate, and Walloons were among the first emigrants whom that company brought to America. Huguenots also early began to choose America as their home.

With the full organization of the company in 1623, permanent settlements began to be made at Manhattan, Wallabout, and Fort Orange. These settlers lived on the most friendly terms with the Indians, and began at once to prosper. Even the Pilgrims at Plymouth expressed regret that the Dutch monopolized the fur-trade.

#### GOVERNMENT OF THE COLONY.

In 1626 Minuit, the first director, arrived, and civil government under the auspices of the company began. To strengthen their title, knowing that it was disputed by the English, they purchased of the Indians the whole of Manhattan Island for \$24. Thus the island became the private property of the company. The will of the company was



expressed in private instructions to the director; or special ordinances were passed by the director and his council, which, if approved by the company, had the force of law. In other matters the laws and customs of Holland prevailed. There were in 1626 about two hundred persons on Manhattan Island. There were thirty houses near the southwest corner of the island, built mostly of bark. A large cargo of furs was sent back during this year to Holland.

Such were the feeble beginnings of the great city of New York. The colonists were industrious and frugal. There were mechanics, traders, and farmers. Implements of husbandry and cattle were provided by the company. There were also in 1626 eight families at Fort Orange, besides ten or twelve sailors. These families shortly after removed to Manhattan. There were also a few Dutch settlers on the Delaware.

In 1628 the company determined to subinfeudate certain colonies or manors. The Spanish wars were engaging the attention of the company so completely, and New Netherland was beginning to be so expensive a province, that it was thought this change of policy would settle the country and open up its resources more rapidly. The peltry was at this time worth only about fifty thousand guilders per annum. The members of the company, to whom these privileges were first offered, being merchants, were not generally landed proprietors at home. A Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions was accordingly passed in 1629. By this, any member of the company who planted a colony of fifty adults in any part of New Netherland except the island of Manhattan should be a patroon or feudal chief of such territory. His land might extend sixteen miles along any navigable river, or eight miles on each side if both banks were occupied, and as far back into the country as he pleased. In 1640 these privileges were extended to any

inhabitant of New Netherland who would plant such a colony. It was required that each patroon and his colonists should support a minister and schoolmaster, and until this could be accomplished should provide themselves with a comforter of the sick. Many large tracts of land were at once appropriated by members of the company. The best known of these is that of Van Rensselaer at Albany. But the scheme was that of a selfish corporation, and in the end did not work well. These Dutch patroonships must not be confounded with the later English manors, which were granted on certain conditions to any one who sought them and could pay the fees.

#### RELIGION IN THE COLONY.

But in the midst of all this traffic the gospel was not forgotten. The ships of the company carried the messages of anxious souls who were longing for the bread of life. The presence of *Kranken-besoeckers*, or comforters of the sick (1626), preceded the more formal services. Sebastian Crol and Jan Huyck were the first to perform these duties. While awaiting the arrival of a clergyman they read to the people the Scriptures and the creeds on Sundays. François Molemaecker, in the same year, in building a horse-mill, prepared a large room over it to serve as a place of worship. Even a small tower was added, in which were placed the bells which had been brought the year before from Porto Rico by the company's fleet.

#### MINISTRY OF MICHAELIUS.

The first minister, Rev. Jonas Michaelius, came over in 1628. This circumstance was for a long period entirely forgotten. In 1858 an elaborate letter of his was discov-

ered, referring to his arrival, his first ministrations, and his views of the country and the natives. It was in this same year that some of the most brilliant successes of the Dutch over the Spaniards took place. These vastly enlarged the fortunes of the humble settlers on Manhattan. The fleets of the West India Company swept the seas, and wrested from the Spaniards the rich spoils of Mexico and Peru. The capture of the Spanish silver fleet, near Cuba, carrying one hundred and forty thousand pounds of pure silver, gave the company twelve million of guilders. A dividend was declared of fifty percent. The following year the company took no less than one hundred and four prizes. In 1630 Brazil was added to their possessions. May not these wonderful successes have been one cause why the first domine, who arrived just during these El Dorado scenes, was entirely forgotten until modern research resurrected his name?

Many of the first settlers brought their certificates of church-membership with them, and a list of these names may have given rise to the story of an organized church as early as 1619, as stated in the life of the Rev. Dr. John H. Livingston. These members, indeed, constituted the elements of a church, though not formally organized according to Presbyterian methods. But Michaelius actually organized a church in 1628. There were then about two hundred and seventy souls on Manhattan Island. The letter of Michaelius<sup>1</sup> is the earliest ecclesiastical document of New York, and therefore possesses a peculiar importance; but we can only give extracts:

<sup>1</sup> It is printed in full in "Colonial Documents," vol. ii., pp. 763-770, and in Corwin's "Manual," 1879, pp. 3-10.



“REVEREND JONAS MICHAELIUS TO THE REVEREND ADRIANUS SMOUTIUS.

“Dated NEW AMSTERDAM, August 11, 1628.

“*Honorable Sir, Well-beloved Brother in Christ, Kind Friend!*

“DE VREDE CHRISTI:

“The favorable opportunity which now presents itself of writing to you, right reverend sir, I cannot let pass without embracing it, according to my promise. And I first unburden myself in this communication of a sorrowful circumstance. It has pleased the Lord, seven weeks after we arrived in this country, to take from me my good partner, who has been to me, for more than sixteen years, a virtuous, faithful, and in every respect amiable yokefellow; and I find myself with three children very much discommoded without her society and assistance. But what have I to say? The Lord himself has done this, in which no one can oppose him. Wherefore I should also be willing, knowing that all things must work together for good to those who love God. I hope, therefore, to bear my cross patiently, and, by the grace and help of the Lord, not to let the courage fail me which I stand in need of in my particular duties. . . .

“Our coming here was agreeable to all, and I hope, by the grace of the Lord, that my services will not be unfruitful. The people, for the most part, are free, somewhat rough, and loose; but I find in almost all of them both love and respect toward me—two things with which hitherto the Lord has everywhere graciously blessed my labors, and which will produce us fruit in our special calling, as you, right reverend, yourself well know and find.

“We have first established the form of a church [*gemeente*]; and, as Brother Bastiaen Crol very seldom comes



down from Fort Orange, because the directorship of that fort and the trade there is committed to him, it has been thought best to choose two elders for my assistance, and for the proper consideration of all such ecclesiastical matters as might occur, intending the coming year, if the Lord permit, to let one of them retire, and to choose another in his place from a double number first lawfully presented by the congregation. One of those whom we have now chosen is the honorable director himself, and the other is the storekeeper of the company, Jan Huyghen, his brother-in-law, persons of very good character as far as I have been able to learn, having both been formerly in office in the church, the one as deacon and the other as elder in the Dutch and French churches, respectively, at Wesel.

“We have had at the first administration of the Lord’s Supper full fifty communicants—not without great joy and comfort for so many—Walloons and Dutch; of whom a portion made their first confession of faith before us, and others exhibited their church certificates. Others had forgotten to bring their certificates with them, not thinking that a church would be formed and established here; and some who brought them had lost them, unfortunately, in a general conflagration; but they were admitted upon the satisfactory testimony of others to whom they were known, and also upon their daily good deportment, since we cannot observe strictly all the usual formalities in making a beginning under such circumstances.

“We administer the holy sacrament of the Lord once in four months, provisionally, until a larger number of people shall otherwise require. The Walloons and French have no service on Sundays otherwise than in the Dutch language, of which they understand very little. A portion of the Walloons are going back to fatherland, either because their years here are expired, or else because some

are not very serviceable to the company. Some of them live far away, and could not come on account of the heavy rains and storms, so that it was neither advisable, nor was it possible, to appoint any special service for so small a number with so much uncertainty. Nevertheless the Lord's Supper was administered to them in the French language and according to the French mode, with a preceding discourse, which I had before me in writing, as I could not trust myself extemporaneously. . . .

"Commending you, right reverend, and all of you to Almighty God, by his grace, to continued health and prosperity, and to eternal salvation of heart.

"From the island of Manhatas, in New Netherland, this 11th August, anno 1628, by me your right reverend's obedient in Christ,

"JONAS MICHAELIUS.

"[Indorsed.] The Honorable, Learned, and Pious Mr. Adrian Smoutius, Faithful Minister of the Holy Gospel of Christ in His Church, dwelling upon the Heerengracht not far from the House of the West India Company, Amsterdam. By the care of a friend, whom God preserve."

(Sealed with a wafered signet not discernible.)

How long Michaelius remained in Manhattan is unknown. In 1637 the Classis of Amsterdam desired to send him back to New Amsterdam. He is then styled "late minister to Virginia." He could hardly have been still in the country in 1633, on the arrival of Domine Bogardus, or the fact would have been noted.

The relations of the Reformed Church to the company were somewhat peculiar. The company was the ruler of the colony, and occupied the same relation to the church

as the state occupied in Holland. The company formally established the Reformed religion. Even calls upon ministers were not valid until approved by the company. The company also promised to maintain, at its own expense, clergymen (each of whom was to receive one hundred and twenty florins per month), schoolmasters, and comforters of the sick; but these promises were not always satisfactorily fulfilled.

The Amsterdam Chamber naturally turned to the Classis of Amsterdam to furnish them with ministers. By that body almost all the colonial clergy were approved and commissioned, and with its committee *ad res externas* a constant correspondence<sup>1</sup> was maintained. The Classis of Amsterdam was, in fact, the metropolitan of New Netherland. For more than a century, until the attempts for ecclesiastical independence were begun, its supremacy was affectionately acknowledged.

Minuit's administration was, upon the whole, prosperous. It was he who bought Manhattan Island. The exports of peltry trebled under him. The vessel which conveyed him back carried five thousand beaver-skins.

#### MINISTRY OF BOGARDUS.

Governor Van Twiller arrived in the spring of 1633. A Spanish caravel was captured on the way and brought safely into port. Rev. Everardus Bogardus, the second clergyman, and Adam Roelandsen, the first schoolmaster, were also on board. The ministry of Bogardus was a stormy one, largely owing to the bad character of the governor. The loft over the horse-mill, in which the

<sup>1</sup> See "Correspondence with Classis of Amsterdam," consisting of one hundred and forty-five letters, 1628-64, in the Archives of General Synod.



people had worshiped since 1626, was now replaced by a plain wooden building, "like a barn," near the East River, in what is now Broad Street, between Pearl and Bridge Streets. Near this church were erected a dwelling-house and stable for the "domine." This word, the vocative of the Latin *dominus*, was, during the middle ages, the usual title by which learned men were addressed. It has been retained in Great Britain as a designation of teachers of the classical languages. In the Netherland churches, which especially insisted on a learned ministry, it became the title of clergymen. As such it crossed the Atlantic, and is still used as an honorable and affectionate term of address to ministers of the Reformed Church, and has also passed into use in some other denominations.

In 1642 the wooden church gave place to a stone building. Director Kieft was anxious to leave behind him some worthy memorial. The idea of building a church was suggested to him by Captain De Vries. Dining with the director one day, he said it was a shame that English visitors should only see such a barnlike-looking building for a church. In New England a fine church was built as soon as they had provided houses for themselves. The churchwardens approved of Kieft's object, but money was wanting. Advantage was taken of the wedding of Domine Bogardus's daughter to procure the necessary means. Kieft promised a thousand guilders from the company. When the guests were becoming somewhat hilarious, De Vries subscribed a hundred guilders, and asked the guests to follow his example. With light heads they subscribed handsomely. Some of them felt like repenting of it afterward, but they were held to their subscriptions. Against the opinion of everybody the director determined to locate the church in the fort, and this was done, partly for security against the Indians, as it was said. The church cost



twenty-five hundred guilders. An ambiguous inscription was placed in the front wall: "Anno 1642. WILLEM KIEFT, DIRECTEUR GENERAEL, heeft de gemeente desen temple doen bouwen." This stone was found in 1790, when the fort was demolished. It was taken to the belfry of the Garden Street Church, and was destroyed in the great fire of 1835.

Domine Bogardus in 1638 married, for his second wife, Anneke Jans. Her first husband, Roelof Jansen, obtained from Director Van Twiller in 1636 a grant of sixty-two acres of land west of Broadway and north of the present Warren Street. This was the original conveyance of the valuable Trinity Church property, and was known as the domine's bouwerie, or farm. Bogardus protested against Kieft's murderous slaughter of the neighboring Indians in 1643, and was not a little persecuted by the governor therefor. After the arrival of Stuyvesant in 1647, Kieft, with a large fortune, together with Bogardus, sailed in the same vessel to give an account of their differences to the company and the Classis. The vessel, however, by mistake, got off her track, and was wrecked on the coast of Wales, and both were lost.<sup>1</sup>

#### ENGLISH SETTLERS IN NEW NETHERLAND.

During Bogardus's ministry the West India Company reached the height of its prosperity. Its fortunes now began to wane, and its dissolution, sooner or later, became inevitable. But now accessions began to come to New Netherland from New England, where intolerance had begun to develop. In 1641 a considerable number of respectable Englishmen, with their clergymen, requested

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. i., pp. 206, 299, 345, 417; vol. ii., p. 144; "Letters in Amst. Correspondence."

permission to settle under the Dutch domain. An ordinance was passed giving them certain freedoms and privileges, among which was the free exercise of their religion.<sup>1</sup> This clergyman was Rev. Francis Doughty. This party settled at Newtown. He for a time officiated for the English in Manhattan. Anne Hutchinson also sought refuge among the Dutch, and settled in Westchester; and even Roger Williams for a time enjoyed the same privilege.

In 1644 Kieft also granted land at Hempstead, and gave the corporators power "to build churches and exercise the Reformed religion which they profess, with the ecclesiastical discipline thereunto belonging."<sup>2</sup> Among these was Rev. Richard Denton, who came from Stamford with his congregation and constituted the first Presbyterian church in the province. Similar privileges were given to the town of Flushing in 1645. They were "to have and enjoy the liberty of conscience according to the custom and manner of Holland, without molestation or disturbance from any magistrate or magistrates, or any other ecclesiastical minister." The same privileges were given the same year to Gravesend,<sup>3</sup> at which place Lady Moody, persecuted both in England and New England, found rest and peace.

#### MINISTRY OF MEGAPOLENSIS.

Patroon Van Rensselaer recognized the necessity of a church on his manor. His colonists, he felt, must be as well conditioned as those at Manhattan. He therefore made an agreement in 1642 with Rev. John van Mekelenburg (better known by the Hellenized name of Megapolensis) to serve his colony and also teach the Indians. He agreed to convey him and his family free to Rensselaer-

<sup>1</sup> "Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland," p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 54.

wyck, provide him with a residence, and guarantee him a salary of a thousand guilders per year for six years, and two hundred guilders in addition for the three following years, if satisfied with his services. The patroon objected to the company's approving this call, as a curtailment of his feudal rights, but at last he consented, with the understanding that his rights should be unprejudiced thereby. A number of emigrants came over with the domine. A church was built the following year.

The new domine soon made his influence felt in restraining the immoralities of frontier life. He was instrumental in saving the life of Father Jogues, a Jesuit missionary, from the extremity of torture and probable death at the hands of the Mohawk Indians. The priest had been captured while ascending the St. Lawrence. The Dutch sought to ransom him, but were refused. At first the Indians despised his zeal, but after some months began to listen to his teachings, and some of them were baptized. They took him with them to Fort Orange. While there a report was received that the French had defeated the Mohawks. The Dutch commander now advised the missionary not to risk their vengeance by returning, but to effect his escape. He remained in close concealment for six weeks. Domine Megapolensis was his constant friend, and saw him safely embarked for New Amsterdam, whence he proceeded to Europe. He subsequently returned to Canada and visited the Mohawks, by whom he was put to death. Similar kindness was shown by the Dutch to Fathers Bressani and Poncet.

Megapolensis himself also learned the heavy language of the Mohawks, and was able to preach to them. A number of them united with his church. He was indeed the first Protestant missionary to the Indians, even preceding John Eliot in New England. Megapolensis published



a valuable tract on the Mohawks, describing their country, language, figure, costumes, religion, and government.<sup>1</sup> In 1649 he started on his return to Europe. Stopping in New Amsterdam, he was prevailed on by Governor Stuyvesant to remain there, that the chief place might not be destitute of ministerial service. He was a man of excellent scholarship, energetic character, and devoted piety.

#### FATHER JOGUES'S DESCRIPTION OF NEW NETHERLAND.

We have an interesting description of New Netherland<sup>2</sup> in 1644 from the hand of Father Jogues, above alluded to. He was the first Catholic priest who ever visited New York. While at Fort Orange and New Amsterdam he was a close observer. After a brief account of the country he alludes to the fort at Manhattan, in which, he says, "stood a pretty large church, built of stone, the house of the governor, whom they call director-general, quite neatly built of brick, the storehouses and barracks." He continues: "On this island of Manhate, and in its environs, there may well be four or five hundred men of different sects and nations. The director-general told me that there were persons there of eighteen different languages. They are scattered here and there on the river, above and below as the beauty and convenience of the spot invited each to settle. Some mechanics, however, who ply their trades are ranged under the fort. All the others were exposed to the incursions of the natives, who, in the year 1643, while I was there, actually killed some twoscore Hollanders, and burnt many houses, and barns full of wheat. . . . No religion is publicly exercised but the Calvinist, and orders are to admit none but Calvinists. But

<sup>1</sup> Translation in Hazard's "State Papers," vol. i., pp. 517-526, and "N. Y. Hist. Soc. Col.," vol. iii.

<sup>2</sup> "Doc. Hist.," vol. iv., pp. 13-15.



this is not observed, for there are, besides Calvinists, in the colony, Catholics, English Puritans, Lutherans, Anabaptists—here called Mennonists—etc. . . . When any one comes to settle in the country they lend him horses, cows, etc.; they give him provisions, all which he repays as soon as he is at ease; and as to the land, he pays in to the West India Company, after ten years, the tenth of the produce which he reaps. . . . The English come very near to them, preferring to hold lands under the Dutch, who ask nothing from them, rather than to be dependent on English lords, who exact rents and would fain be absolute.” On the South River “there is also a Dutch settlement, but the Swedes have at its mouth another, extremely well provided with men and cannon. . . . There is already some little commerce with Virginia and New England. . . . Deer-hunting is abundant. There are some houses here built of stone. They make lime of oyster-shells, great heaps of which are found here, made formerly by the savages, who subsisted in part by this fishery.” After referring to the climate and fruits and the beautiful river, he briefly describes Rensselaerwyck, or Albany. There is “a wretched little fort, called Fort Orange, built of logs, with four or five pieces of cannon. . . . This is maintained by the West India Company.” There is “a colony sent here by this Renselaer, who is the patroon. This colony is composed of about a hundred persons, who reside in some twenty-five or thirty houses, built along the river. In the principal house resides the patroon’s agent; the minister has his apart, in which service is performed. . . . Some [Indian] nations near the sea having murdered some Hollanders of distant settlements, the Hollanders killed a hundred and fifty Indians. . . . As a result of these troubles, troops from New England assisting, finally about sixteen hundred Indians were slain.”

It was in 1644 that the second term of twenty-one years (1602-44) of the East India Company expired. The first term of twenty-four years (1621-45) of the West India Company was now about to expire. The latter company, conscious of failing fortune, now offered to transfer all its colonies and other property to the East India Company. But as its assets were five million florins less than its liabilities, the East India Company refused the offer. The company's charter was extended.

#### GOVERNOR PETER STUYVESANT.

Under the maladministration of Kieft, with the Indian slaughters above alluded to, the colony was nearly ruined. Under Stuyvesant it began again to revive and flourish. Stuyvesant was an elder in the Reformed Church. Almost the first act of Stuyvesant was to secure an ordinance (1648) for the better observance of the Sabbath.<sup>1</sup> Rev. John Backerus was temporarily supplying the church of Manhattan (1647-49) at this time. A Sabbath afternoon service was also now begun, and all were required to attend. Stuyvesant was, however, very arbitrary, and the people began to demand the right of sharing in the government. Stuyvesant was compelled to yield. An elective judiciary was secured, and the city was incorporated in 1653, with a burgher government after the model of the cities of Holland.

#### MINISTRIES OF DRISIUS AND POLHEMUS.

The West India Company now wished to have a minister who could preach also in English and French, as well as Dutch. English settlers were becoming numerous, and

<sup>1</sup> "Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland," p. 98.

it was thought important to secure their interest in the Reformed Church. French Huguenots were also coming over in increasing numbers. Rev. Samuel Drisius had been pastor of the Dutch Church of Austin Friars in London, and could preach in Dutch, German, French, or English. The company therefore asked for his appointment, and secured it. He labored in New Netherland for twenty-one years (1652-73). He at once began to preach to the French in the city, and after 1660, as long as his health permitted, he also served the Huguenot and Vaudois settlers on Staten Island.<sup>1</sup> He was the first to propose a Latin school in New Amsterdam, to save the youth the expense and trouble of going to Boston for a classical training.<sup>2</sup> The project was regarded with favor, but no Latin teacher came over until 1659, when the company sent Dr. Alexander Carolus Curtius, at a salary of five hundred guilders. The city government allowed him two hundred more. He also practiced medicine. In 1662 he was succeeded by Domine Aegidius Luyck, who remained until 1676.

Rev. John T. Polhemus (1654-76) was the first minister on Long Island of the Reformed Church. He officiated at Flatbush, and occasionally at Flatlands, Gravesend, and Breuckelen. The West India Company being obliged to evacuate Brazil in 1654, where Polhemus had been stationed, he came to New Netherland, while his wife went to Holland to collect his salary of the company. Before this the Dutch of Midwout, or Flatbush, and other localities on Long Island, were obliged to cross the East River to attend service. To save them this trouble a church had been organized at Midwout by Megapolensis, and the Classis had been asked to send over a minister. Just at

<sup>1</sup> See Clute's "Hist. of Staten Island," p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> "Amsterdam Cor;" "Doc. Hist.," vol. iii., p. 69; "Col. Docs.," vol. I, p. 426; vol. iii., pp. 75, 646; "Gen. and Biograph. Record," vol. vii., p. 61.



this juncture Polhemus arrived. Stopping on his way in Delaware, he organized a church while there at New Amstel, afterward New Castle. He was the first to propose an association of the American ministers and churches. As early as 1662 he writes: "We stand in need of communication with one another in the form of a Classis, after the manner of the fatherland. It is desirable that this be begun, although I do not know of much business to be transacted."<sup>1</sup> He was the first pastor at Brooklyn.

#### FEARS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE COLONY—BEGINNING OF INTOLERANCE.

The failing fortunes of the West India Company, evidenced by its inability to pay its dividends, the increasing encroachments on the part of New England, with the consciousness of military weakness, made the governor fearful for the safety of the province. These circumstances, together with Stuyvesant's arbitrary character in general, go far to explain the intolerant spirit toward other bodies of Christians which now began to manifest itself. Freedom of worship, as in Holland, had been granted frequently by express legislation, as we have seen. But now, in contrast with almost all Dutch precedent, a different policy began to be pursued. It can only be explained by the fears which began to arise respecting the continuance of the province under the Dutch sway, together with the misfortune of a government by a close commercial corporation having its own selfish ends in view. This unchristian spirit of bigotry was a temporary blemish on the colony.

The Lutherans about 1650 were becoming numerous in the province, and they wanted to call a clergyman of their

<sup>1</sup> "Amsterdam Cor.," "Doc. Hist.," vol. iii., p. 70; "Col. Docs.," vol. ii., p. 72.



own. They had been attendants on the Dutch church. They asked, in 1652, the privilege of public services by themselves. Stuyvesant declined, because, as he said, he was bound by his oath to support the Reformed religion. The Lutherans then made the same petition to the West India Company and to the States-General. Megapolensis and Drisius wrote<sup>1</sup> to the Classis, October 6, 1653, opposing the request.

They began by making grateful acknowledgments of the zeal of the company and the Classis in establishing the Reformed religion in the province. They then referred to the Lutheran request to the governor, in October, 1652, to call a Lutheran minister from Holland, and to organize a separate church. "This would tend to the injury of our church, the diminution of the hearers, and to the increase of contention, of which we have had a sufficiency for a while past. It would also pave the way for other sects, so that in time our place would prove a receptacle for all sorts of heretics and fanatics." After referring to two requests to the governor, as well as those to the States-General and to the West India Company, they continue: "Therefore it is our humble and earnest request that your Rev. body will use your influence with the Honorable Directors of the Company, that they may so provide and determine that the project of our Lutheran friends may be prevented. Thus the welfare, prosperity, and edification of the church here may be promoted. For as yet, while no other religion than the Reformed has been openly exercised, all who wish to engage in public worship come to our church." Some of the Lutherans had also united in the communion of the Supper. "We have also communicated these matters to the *Heeren majores*. But we request your Rev. body occasionally to refresh their memory, lest, through

<sup>1</sup> Letter 62, in "Amst. Cor."

want of proper attention to the subject, the requested permission should be given." They declare that Stuyvesant would rather resign his office than to have the request of the Lutherans granted.

The West India Company, accordingly, at first refused the Lutherans their just request. Stuyvesant was directed to use all mild means to allure the Lutherans to attend Dutch churches. The Lutherans yielded temporarily, but in 1656 renewed their request, not now through Stuyvesant, but directly to the company. They demanded the same rights as Lutherans and others enjoyed in Holland.

Many sects had developed in New Netherland, owing to the well-understood Dutch toleration which had been enjoyed up to 1654. At Newtown there were many Independents and a few Presbyterians. John Moore preached there, but did not administer the sacraments. At Gravesend there were many Anabaptists. They rejected infant baptism, the Sabbath, and the very office of preacher; for through these things, said they, come many difficulties. The Puritans showed some strength at Westchester, where sermons were read to them out of a book. There was a Lutheran minister at the South River settlement, but his character was not good. Flushing had recently driven away Rev. Francis Doughty; and Rev. Richard Denton, a Presbyterian, who had been preaching at Hempstead for ten years, was getting into trouble for baptizing the children of non-communicants. There were now only four Dutch ministers on duty in the colony. Megapolensis and Drisius were at New Amsterdam, occasionally officiating at Stuyvesant's bouwerie and Harlem, and perhaps also on Staten Island. Schaats was at Beverwyck, afterward Albany. Polhemus labored at Flatbush and other places on Long Island. At Kingston and on the South River a

sermon was read on Sundays out of a book. There were only three schoolmasters among the Dutch in the whole country.

The Dutch ministers in their correspondence often referred to the increase of the so-called sects. In February, 1656, they made a formal complaint against them. This was made to Stuyvesant, and not to the Classis or the company. They say that many unqualified persons were holding conventicles and preaching, and that nothing but confusion and disorder could result therefrom in church and state. The governor was in entire sympathy with them, if he did not, indeed, suggest the complaint.

Stuyvesant and his council accordingly passed an ordinance,<sup>1</sup> February 1, 1656, forbidding all unauthorized conventicles and the preaching of unqualified persons. He assumed that this was "to promote the glory of God, the increase of the Reformed religion, and the peace and harmony of the country." Every unlicensed preacher who should violate this ordinance was to be fined £100 Flemish. The ordinance, however, disclaimed "any prejudice to any patent heretofore given, any lording over the conscience, or any prohibition of the reading of God's holy word and the domestic praying and worshiping of each one in his own family." He had "proclamations" posted in different parts of the colony proclaiming this ordinance. The law was enforced, and fines and imprisonments followed—and also righteous complaints to the West India Company and to the States-General. Friends in Holland remonstrated against Stuyvesant's action, and compelled the West India Company to promise the same toleration in New Netherland as was enjoyed in Holland. The company, accordingly, took the following action, dated June

<sup>1</sup> "Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland," p. 213.



14, 1656. They say: "We should have gladly seen that your Honor had not posted up the transmitted edict against the Lutherans, and had not punished them by imprisonment, which they declare was inflicted on them, inasmuch as it has always been our intention to treat them with all peaceableness and quietness. Wherefore your Honor shall not hereafter allow any more such or similar edicts to be published without our previous knowledge, but suffer the matter to pass in silence, and permit them their free worship in their houses."

The Lutherans received this information before Stuyvesant did. In October, 1656, they accordingly informed him, under the form of a petition, concerning this action of the company. They said: "The Honorable Directors of the West India Company, our patrons, have granted their supplications, and in a full college have resolved and decreed that in the West Indies and New Netherland, under their jurisdiction, the doctrines of the unaltered Augsburg Confession of Faith might and should be tolerated in the same manner as in Holland, under its praiseworthy administration." They therefore requested that no further obstructions be placed in the way of their worship. "Under God's blessing we design to conduct this by prayer, reading, and singing until some time next spring, when we hope and expect, by the favor of God, that a qualified person shall be obtained from the fatherland as our pastor and teacher." Stuyvesant answered that he would seek information as to these statements; in the meantime the old orders would remain.

In the spring of 1657 Rev. John Ernest Goetwater, the Lutheran clergyman, arrived. He was sent over by the Lutheran church of Amsterdam. Neither the company nor the Dutch Classis had been consulted. But Goetwater was cited before the authorities, hampered in his move-



ments, and finally ordered to return to Holland, which order he evaded for a while. The vacillating company finally approved of this order, "though it might have been done in a more gentle way," they add.

## GROWTH OF THE CHURCH.

The church continued to grow slowly. In 1661, Bergen, in New Jersey, was settled. The people erected a log church, and twenty-seven members were at once enrolled. For ninety years they remained without a settled pastor, but they either conducted the services themselves or had supplies on Mondays from New York. After churches were organized at Hackensack, Passaic, and elsewhere in New Jersey, they occasionally had assistance from these sources. The French and Waldenses now organized on the south side of Staten Island, and Drisius visited them bimonthly. In the same year some Frenchmen founded the church of Bushwyck on Long Island, and a church partly French and partly Dutch was formed at Harlem, in which Michiel Zyperius (Siperius), a proponent, preached for the French as early as 1659.

But while Stuyvesant was pursuing his narrow policy, contrary to the views of the company, the company itself was negotiating<sup>1</sup> with Puritans in England (1661), offering them the most liberal terms, and guaranteeing them perfect freedom of worship, if they would settle in New Jersey under the company's sway. The circumstances of the Puritans in England after the fall of the Commonwealth and with the accession of Charles II. were anything but pleasant.

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., pp. 37-39.

## PERSECUTION OF QUAKERS.

There had been a lull of a couple of years (1659-61) in Stuyvesant's unholy zeal. But now reports came to him from Jamaica and neighboring towns that many Quakers<sup>1</sup> who had settled on Long Island had been holding their conventicles all this time. Stuyvesant and his council therefore passed another ordinance<sup>2</sup> (1662) against conventicles, under penalty of fifty guilders for every person present and twice as much for the preacher or exhorter, or owner of the building. Increasing penalties were to be enforced for renewed offenses.<sup>3</sup>

The penalties fell especially on Quakers in Jamaica. Fines and imprisonments were enforced, and the place was subjected to official espionage. John Bowne was one of the chief sufferers, being finally banished. But this proved the turning-point in this sad history. He so represented matters upon his arrival in Holland that the company rebuked Stuyvesant (1663) for his bigotry as follows:

"Although it is our cordial desire that similar and other sectarians may not be found there, yet, as the contrary seems to be the fact, we doubt very much whether rigorous proceedings against them ought not to be discontinued; unless, indeed, you intend to check and destroy your population, which, in the youth of your existence, ought rather to be encouraged by all possible means. Wherefore it is our opinion that some connivance is useful, and that at least the consciences of men ought to remain free and unshackled. Let every one remain free as long as he is modest, moderate, his political conduct irreproachable, and as long as he does not offend others or oppose the

<sup>1</sup> See Onderdonk's "*Annals of Hempstead*," etc.

<sup>2</sup> "*Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland*," p. 428.

<sup>3</sup> "*Amst. Cor.*," Letters 78, 79.

government. This maxim of moderation has always been the guide of our magistrates in this city, and the consequence has been that people have flocked from every land to this asylum. Tread thus in their steps, and we doubt not you will be blessed." This ended persecution in New Netherland. A couple of years later Bowne returned to New York, and met Stuyvesant as a private citizen who seemed ashamed of what he had done.

## SABBATH AND ANTI-LIQUOR LAWS.

In October, 1656,<sup>1</sup> the director and council passed another ordinance for the better observance of the Sabbath. Laws had been repeatedly enacted on this subject, generally closely connected with the prohibition of liquor-selling on that day. In 1641 it was forbidden to tap beer during divine service. In 1647 it was declared that inasmuch as the sale of strong drinks produced many brawls on Sunday, therefore none should be sold before 2 P.M. on that day, or 4 P.M. when there was divine service, except to travelers and boarders; and none should be sold any day after 9 P.M. In March, 1648, an elaborate Sabbath law was enacted. The former laws were recapitulated and renewed. It is asserted in the preamble that one fourth of the houses in New Amsterdam are devoted to the sale of liquors. It was enjoined that no new taverns should be opened without permission, and the present tavern-keepers should only continue for four years; neither could they sell out their business. They were also forbidden to sell to Indians, and they must register their names. In April, 1648, as we have seen, an ordinance was passed for a Sunday afternoon service in addition to that of the morning. During these services no tapping, hunting, fishing, or trading should be

<sup>1</sup> "Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland," pp. 258-263.



allowed, under a penalty of twenty-five florins. In 1656 these Sunday laws were still more fully elaborated, showing a growth of healthy sentiment for a stricter observance of the Sabbath. The director-general and council forbade "all persons from performing or doing on the Lord's day of rest, by us called Sunday, any ordinary labor, such as plowing, sowing, mowing, building, wood-sawing, smithing, bleaching, hunting, fishing, or any other work which may be lawful on other days, on pain of forfeiting one pound Flemish for each person; much less any lower or unlawful exercise and amusement, drunkenness, frequenting taverns or tippling-houses, dancing, playing ball, cards, trick-track, tennis, cricket, or ninepins, going on pleasure-parties in a boat, car, or wagon, before, between, or during divine service, on pain of a double fine; especially, all tavern-keepers or tapsters from entertaining any clubs, or tapping; bestowing, giving, or selling, directly or indirectly, any brandy, wine, beer, or strong liquor to any person before, between, or during the sermons, under a fine of six guilders, to be forfeited by the tavern-keeper or tapster for each person, and three guilders for every person found drinking at the time aforesaid.

"In like manner, tavern-keepers or tapsters shall not accommodate or entertain any company, or tap, sell, or give any wine, beer, distilled liquors or waters to any person at night, on Sundays or on other days, after the posting of the guard or ringing of the bell, on the same penalty; the domestic guest, persons appointed on public business with the consent and by order of the magistrate, alone excepted."

Then follow laws forbidding the selling or giving liquor to Indians, of fraud in the weight of bread, of mixing bran with flour. Bakers and tapsters were required to renew their licenses quarterly. The fee was one pound Flemish. The fines for violation were to go, one third



to the officer who enters the complaint, one third to the church or the poor, and one third for the public benefit.

There were subsequent references, more or less full, to these Sunday laws in 1657 and 1658. Different towns also passed their own local ordinances concerning Sabbath observance. In 1663 the sale of liquor on the Sabbath was forbidden between sunrise and sunset.<sup>1</sup>

#### FATHER LE MOYNE.

In 1657-58, Father Le Moyne, a Jesuit from Canada, spent the winter in New Amsterdam. There were a number of Catholics already residing there. A friendship grew up between Le Moyne and Megapolensis, especially on account of the latter's early labors among the Mohawks. Le Moyne told him of the salt-springs which he had discovered in 1654 in Onondaga. Megapolensis could hardly believe it. In writing to the Classis subsequently he referred to the matter, and added, "I will not discuss whether this be true or whether it is a Jesuit lie."

#### MINISTRY OF SELYNS.

The company at length induced Rev. Henry Selyns and Mr. Herman Blom to come to New Netherland. Mr. Blom proved acceptable to the people of Kingston, and accordingly returned to Holland for ordination. Mr. Selyns settled over the congregations of Breuckelen and adjoining places, from Wallabout to Gowanus. Breuckelen had now thirty-one families and one hundred and thirty-four persons. Selyns also occasionally preached to the Huguenots on Staten Island. Steps were taken at once to build a church in Breuckelen; meantime the people worshiped in a barn. Stuyvesant subscribed two hundred and fifty

<sup>1</sup> "Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland," p. 448.

guilders toward Selyn's salary, provided he would preach on Sunday afternoons at his *bouwerie* on Manhattan Island. The director had there about forty negroes, who would thus receive religious instruction. Selyns agreed to do this. Stuyvesant urged that other clergymen should be sent over to supply New Utrecht, Gravesend, and New Harlem, besides a village of about one hundred and thirty families on the North River. The church at Beverwyck (Albany), under Schaats, had in 1660 about two hundred members. Selyns remained only four years, the term for which he had engaged himself. He returned, as he said, to gladden the eyes of his aged parents. He subsequently returned to America in 1682, and played a most important part in resisting the establishment of the English Church over a population which was overwhelmingly Dutch.

#### CATECHETICAL ORDINANCE.

The last ordinance of New Netherland on the subject of religion was passed in March, 1664, and related to the more careful instruction of youth in the principles of the Christian religion. Catechetical instruction has always been one of the strong points of the Dutch Church, and it seems appropriate to give this last ordinance of New Netherland in this connection. It is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

"Whereas it is most highly necessary and most important that the youth from childhood up be instructed not only in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but especially and chiefly in the principles and fundamentals of the Reformed religion, according to the lesson of that wise King, Solomon—'Train up a child in the way he shall go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it'—so that in time such men may proceed therefrom as may be fit to serve their

<sup>1</sup> "Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland," p. 461.

fatherland as well in the church as in the state. This, then, being taken into particular consideration by the director-general and council of New Netherland, because the number of children is, through the merciful blessing of the Lord, considerably increasing here, they have deemed it necessary, in order that so useful and God-acceptable a work may be the more effectually promoted, to recommend and command the schoolmasters, as we do hereby, that they shall appear in the church with the children committed to their care and intrusted to them, on Wednesday, before the commencement of the sermon, in order, after the conclusion of divine service, that each may, in the presence of the reverend ministers and elders who may be present, examine his scholars as to what they have committed to memory of the Christian commandments and catechism, and what progress they have made; after which performance the children shall be dismissed for that day, and allowed a decent recreation."

#### CONQUEST BY THE ENGLISH.

But the English conquest was at hand. The West India Company had grandly succeeded for a decade or two, in a business point of view. The power and prestige of Holland had also been wonderfully increased, while Spain and Portugal had been deeply humbled. But the intoxication of their brilliant and marvelous success brought on at length an overwhelming bankruptcy, and this was one of the causes which led the Dutch colony to fall an easy prey to the English. The right of the Dutch to occupy the Hudson had always been disputed by the English. Rumors of war were becoming rife; but by repeated falsehoods the Dutch minister in England had been completely deceived concerning the king's intentions. Before the sailing



of the fleet, however, Charles II. had granted the whole territory between the Connecticut and the Delaware to his brother James, the Duke of York and Albany. When the fleet appeared and demanded the surrender, there was no adequate force at hand to defend the colony. With great reluctance, and only upon the urgent advice of the clergymen to save unnecessary bloodshed, Stuyvesant surrendered, and New Netherland passed without a blow under the dominion of the English. The duke became the proprietary ruler of the province of New York only; for while the fleet was yet on the sea, to raise money for his extravagances he ceded New Jersey to Carteret and Berkeley. There were at this time three cities, thirty villages, and ten thousand inhabitants in the province.

The Dutch secured excellent terms at the surrender. They were to continue free denizens, to enjoy their private property, to dispose of it at pleasure, and were to enjoy their own customs concerning inheritances. In reference to religion Article VIII. reads: "The Dutch here shall enjoy the liberty of their consciences in divine worship and in church discipline."<sup>1</sup>

Domine Drisius informed the Classis of Amsterdam of the surrender in the following letter:

"NO. 145. REV. SAMUEL DRISIUS TO THE CLASSIS OF  
AMSTERDAM.

MANHATTAN, September 15, 1664.

*"To the Reverend, Learned, and Pious Brethren of the  
Reverend Classis of Amsterdam:*

"I cannot refrain informing you of our present condition, viz., that we are now brought under the government of the king of England.

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. ii., p. 251.



“On the 26th August there arrived in the bay of the North River, near Staten Island, four large men-of-war or frigates, well mounted, and manned with soldiers and marines. They had a patent or commission from the king of Great Britain to summon this province to surrender, in the name of his Majesty, and to take possession of it. If this was not done amicably the place was to be attacked with violence, and everything was to be given up to the English soldiers for sacking, rapine, and booty. The people here were not a little frightened at the arrival of these frigates.

“Our rulers, the director and council, as also the officers of the city, took the matter very much to heart. They earnestly endeavored to delay the affair by repeated embassies to the general, Richard Nicholls, by requesting that the business should be submitted to his Majesty of England, and the lords, the states of Holland, but all was in vain. They disembarked their soldiers about two miles off, at Gravesandt [Gravesend], and marched them on foot on Long Island to the ferry opposite this place. The frigates came down upon us on September 4th, under full sail. They had put all their cannon on one side, having orders, and intending, if any resistance were offered, to fire a full broadside into this open place, and so to take the city by force and give up everything to plunder and blood [*lit.*, blood-bath].

“Our honorable rulers, both of the [West India] company and the city, were full inclined to defend the place. But they realized that it would be impossible, as the town was not in a defensible condition; and even if it were fortified it could not be done, for all the men within the bounds of the city would have to stand at least four rods apart; there was also but a slender supply of powder, either in the fortress or in the town; there was no hope of deliverance

or aid; and every day the concourse of the English, both on foot and horseback, increased. They came from New England with desire to pillage the city. They offered their services against us as privateers, being about six hundred in number, according to report, with fifty French privateers. The English permitted this; therefore our authorities, at the urgent request of the citizens and burghers, were obliged, although unwillingly, to resolve to come to terms, in order to prevent pillage and bloodshed.

“After the surrender of the place several English people, whom we have long known, and who were well affected toward us, came to us and said that God had singularly overruled the matter, in that the province had passed over by treaty; otherwise nothing else could have happened but pillage, murder, and general ruin. This is also confirmed by several soldiers, who say that they came hither from England in hope of booty; and since it has turned out so differently, they desired permission to return to England.

“It is stipulated in the articles [of surrender] that the religion and doctrine shall continue as heretofore, and the ministers shall remain. We could not abandon our congregations and hearers. We judged that we must continue with them, for a time at least, and perform our offices, lest they should become entirely scattered, and grow wild.

“The West India Company owes me quite a sum, which I hope and desire will be paid. Thus I close, commending your persons and services to the love of God. I remain

“Your Reverences’

“Obedient Brother,

“SAMUEL DRISIUS.”

## THE MINISTERS AND CHURCHES OF NEW NETHERLAND.

Before the conquest the West India Company had provided thirteen ministers for New Netherland. Six of these were in service at the surrender. There were then also eleven churches in existence, besides a couple of out-stations. As these ministers and churches<sup>1</sup> were the original root from which the Reformed Church in America has developed, under peculiarly adverse circumstances, the names are given. Those in service at the surrender are put in small capitals.

*Ministers.*

Jonas Michaelius, 1628-(32?).

Everardus Bogardus, 1633-47.

JOHN MEGAPOLENSIS, 1642-70.

John Backerus, 1647-49.

[*William Grassmere, suspended; 1651-52.*]

SAMUEL DRISIUS, 1652-73.

GIDEON SCHAATS, 1652-94.

JOHN T. POLHEMUS, 1654-76.

Caspar Carpentier, 1657-84. Little known of him.

Everardus Welius, 1657-59.

MICHIEL ZYPERIUS (Siperius), 1659-64. A proponent.

HERMAN BLOM, 1660-67.

Henry Selyns, 1660-64.

AEGIDIUS LUYCK, 1662-72. Teacher of grammar-school.

SAMUEL MEGAPOLENSIS, 1664-68.

*Churches.*

New Amsterdam (New York), 1628.

Beverwyck or Rensselaerwyck (Albany), 1642.

<sup>1</sup> For fuller details of all these ministers and churches, see Corwin's "Manual," 1879.

New Amstel (New Castle), Del., 1654.

Midwout (Flatbush), L. I., 1654.

Amersfoort (Flatlands), L. I., 1654.

Breuckelen (Brooklyn), L. I., 1654.

Gravesend, L. I., 1655.

Esopus (Kingston), 1659.

Bergen, N. J., 1660.

Stuyvesant's Bouwerie (station), 1660.

Harlem, 1660.

Bushwyck, 1661.

Staten Island (station), 1661.

#### TERMS OF SURRENDER.

Provision was made by the officials of the city, who were temporarily continued in power, for the due support of the Dutch ministers until Governor Nicholls could make other arrangements. According to the terms that all public buildings should remain in their former uses, the Dutch had exclusive right to the church in the fort. But the chaplain of the English forces had no proper place in which to celebrate the English service; the Dutch, therefore, kindly allowed him to do this in their chapel after their own services were ended. Thus was the Episcopal service begun in New York, and it remained on such a footing for nearly thirty years.

The civil administration of the Dutch left its permanent impress on the customs, laws, and civilization of New York and New Jersey. The knowledge of the Dutch jurisprudence of this period is essential to the full understanding of the constitutional history of these States. Dutch jurisprudence, founded on Roman law, was superior to the



contemporary feudal law introduced by the English. The Dutch legislation concerning police, property, inheritances, and status shows a highly civilized state of society. The laws relative to the public record of legal instruments were in advance of contemporary English laws. No principle of primogeniture prevailed. The penal laws of New York were always more enlightened and less severe than those of England—a direct result of the earlier Dutch institutions, which were more humane.

At the surrender the English received one of the most flourishing colonies in America, possessing a hardy, vigorous, and thrifty people, well adapted to all the principles of civil and religious freedom. And history shows that these Dutch colonists cheerfully accepted all that was good in English customs and laws, but stoutly and successfully resisted what they considered undesirable. This could not have been the case if their prior political, religious, and social conditions had not been of a superior kind.<sup>1</sup>

Will this feeble Dutch Church, consisting of hardly a dozen congregations and half a dozen ministers, now subject to a foreign power determined to establish its own state church, be able to survive amid these new and hampering surroundings? The parent church had successfully resisted a great empire and accomplished grand results. Will the handful of their descendants in America be correspondingly energetic? At the surrender only thirty-six years had elapsed since the arrival of the first minister; and the American Reformed (Dutch) Church has developed, under peculiarly adverse circumstances, from these small beginnings, having now more than six hundred ministers and churches and more than one hundred thousand communicants; raising annually more than a million dollars

<sup>1</sup> See Fowler on Constitutional and Legal History of New York, in "Memorial Hist. of the City," vol. i., pp. 523-538.

for home expenses and a half million for benevolence; with thoroughly equipped institutions and other agencies for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom at home and abroad. It is our purpose briefly to trace the further struggles of this church and her development.

PERIOD II.

RELATION OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN PARTICULAR, AND OF THE PROVINCE OF NEW YORK IN GENERAL, TO ENGLISH ECCLESIASTICAL LAWS (1664-1708).





## CHAPTER II.

### THE GOVERNMENT OF JAMES AS DUKE (1664-85) AND KING (1685-89).

#### PRELIMINARY.

THE English conquest of New Netherland gave a sudden check to the development and prosperity of the Reformed Church. Dutch immigration practically ceased. Many Hollanders removed to the Carolinas. The ministry was soon reduced from six to three, and it continued at this small number for half a score of years, although there were ten thousand souls to be ministered unto. But the Dutch, as we have seen, had obtained excellent terms at the surrender. When, therefore, they were required to take the oath<sup>1</sup> of allegiance to Great Britain, they declined, until assured in writing "that the Articles of Surrender are not in the least broken, or intended to be broken, by any words or expression in the said oath." This was important not only as regards property and certain customs, but especially as regards religion. It gave them a certain legal standing in reference to their own forms of public worship and church discipline. Under these conditions the Dutch ministers and inhabitants became citizens of the British empire.

Their relations to the state church of Holland were now necessarily modified by the political change, but their exact character was not defined. A century later, in the efforts to secure ecclesiastical independence, their relations to the Church of Holland on the one hand and to the English

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., pp. 74-76.

government on the other became important topics of discussion. Was the American church still an integral part of the church in Holland when its ministers and people were subjects of the British king? But then, also, what was their relation to English ecclesiastical law? Although they were now naturalized Englishmen they were not members of the Church of England, but neither were they dissenters. They belonged to a collateral church of the Reformation. By the terms of the surrender they were to enjoy not only liberty of conscience in private, but in public worship and church discipline. But did this apply to later generations? The *Dutch here* shall enjoy such liberty of conscience. And what was to be the status of other residents and new immigrants? In other words, what was to be the ultimate general position of the colony of New York in reference to English ecclesiastical law?

Colonies which had charter governments generally established the most numerous body of Christians as the church of the colony. But New York was not a charter government. It was first (1664–85) a proprietary government. The Duke of York held the colony as a fief of the crown. It was of the nature of a feudatory principality. The duke could make local laws in general harmony with the English legal system, and establish courts, with only a final appeal to the crown. The duke's patent divested the crown of all but paramount authority. But when the duke became King James II. (1685) his ducal proprietorship was merged in the crown. New York then became a provincial government. But the relation of the now provincial colony to English law still depended on the question whether the English now resumed a claim to the territory by right of prior discovery—which they often asserted—or whether they obtained it by conquest. If they now held it by right of prior discovery, the Dutch had only been

trespassers on English soil, and the legal system of England would at once prevail as far as it was applicable; but if by conquest, the Dutch system of jurisprudence, founded on Roman law, with the special ordinances of New Netherland, would remain in force until repealed. These were questions of dispute during the whole of the colonial period, and judicial decisions turned thereon. There was never, however, any serious attempt to enforce the English Acts of Uniformity between 1664 and 1689, when the Act of Toleration was passed in the first year of William.

Owing to these complicated conditions the relations of church and state in New York became involved in peculiar difficulties, and gave rise to more serious trouble than in any other colony. The Dutch and French, with English dissenters and some others, constituted nine tenths of the population during the greater part of the colonial period. As Americans they had also certain decided opinions as to their inherent constitutional rights. Will this great majority permit a few English officials with a handful of followers to impose a church polity and form of worship upon them in which they do not believe? Against all such efforts the Dutch determinedly set themselves, and they were successful. They prevented the passage of any provincial law establishing the Church of England. But it was subsequently assumed, contrary to fact, that the said church was established.

#### THE FIRST DECADE UNDER ENGLISH RULE.<sup>1</sup>

During the first decade after the surrender there was not much opportunity for conflict, as the population was overwhelmingly Dutch. It would have been absurd to have attempted a foreign ecclesiastical establishment at once.

<sup>1</sup> "Amsterdam Correspondence," Letters 145-165.



A code of laws had been prepared, known as the "Duke's Laws," which had a liberal tone. But we are obliged to remember that James was a Roman Catholic, and the king, his brother, was in sympathy with him in this respect. Nevertheless the general pressure of English policy in religion, and the Acts of Conformity and the Test Acts, prevented them from flaunting their personal views too publicly; yea, even compelled them, in state papers, to style themselves defenders of a faith in which they did not believe. We are sorry to be obliged to say the liberal tone of the "Duke's Laws" must be read in the light of these facts. The following, so far as they relate to religion, are

#### THE DUKE'S LAWS.

"Whereas the public worship of God is much discredited for want of painful and able ministers to instruct the people in the true religion, and for want of convenient places capable to receive any number or assembly of people, in a decent manner, for celebrating God's holy ordinances, these ensuing laws are to be observed in every *parish*, viz. :

"1. That in each parish within this government a church be built in the most convenient part thereof, capable to receive and accommodate two hundred persons.

"2. That for the making and proportioning the levies and assessments for building and repairing the churches, provision for the poor, maintenance for the minister, as well as for the more orderly managing of all parochial affairs in other cases expressed, eight of the most able men of each parish be, by the major part of the householders of the said parish, chosen to be overseers, out of which number the constable and the aforesaid eight overseers shall yearly make choice of two of the said number to be churchwardens; and in case of the death of any of the said



overseers and churchwardens, or his or their departure out of the parish, the said constable and overseers shall make choice of another to supply his room.

“ 3. Every overseer is to take the oath of allegiance at the time of his admittance into his office, in the presence of the minister, overseer, and constable of the parish, besides the oath of his office.

“ 4. To prevent scandalous and ignorant pretenders to the ministry from intruding themselves as teachers, no minister shall be permitted to officiate within the government but such as shall produce testimonials to the governor that he hath received ordination either from some Protestant bishop or minister, within some part of his Majesty's dominions, or the dominions of any foreign prince of the Reformed religion; upon which testimony the governor shall induce the said minister into the parish that shall make presentation of him as duly elected by the major part of the inhabitants [being] householders.

“ 5. That the minister of every parish shall preach constantly every Sunday, and shall also pray for the king, queen, Duke of York, and the royal family. And every person affronting or disturbing any congregation on the Lord's day, and on such public days of fast and thanksgiving as are appointed to be observed, after the presentments thereof by the churchwardens to the sessions, and due conviction thereof, shall be punished by fine or imprisonment, according to the merit and nature of the offense. And every minister shall also publicly administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper once every year at the least in his parish church, not denying the private benefit thereof to persons that for want of health shall require the same in their houses, under the penalty of loss of preferment, unless the minister be restrained in point of conscience.

"6. No minister shall refuse the sacrament of baptism to the children of Christian parents, when they shall be tendered, under penalty of loss of preferment.

"7. Ministers are to marry persons after legal publication or sufficient license.

"8. Legal publication shall be so esteemed when the persons so to be married are three several days asked in the church, or have a special license.

"9. Sundays are not to be profaned by travelers, laborers, or vicious persons.

"10. That no congregations shall be disturbed in their private meetings, in the time of prayer, preaching, or other divine service; nor shall any person be molested, fined, or imprisoned, for differing in judgment in matters of religion, who professes Christianity.

"11. No person of scandalous or vicious life shall be admitted to the holy sacrament, who hath not given satisfaction therein to the minister."

### *Charges Public.*

"Every inhabitant shall contribute to all charges, both in church and state, whereof he doth or may receive benefit, according to the equal proportion of his estate."

These laws were not at first enforced very strictly among the Dutch. But besides these laws the commissioners, headed by Colonel Nicholls, had also secret instructions which contained not a little on the subject of religion. These are directed by the king to the five "Commissioners employed by us to our Plantations in America, *in and about* New England, to be considered and communicated only betweene themselves."<sup>1</sup> They are therein directed to resume possession of the territory wrongfully held by

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., pp. 57-61.

the Dutch. They were to secure a modification of the charters of the New England colonies, if possible, so as to increase the king's prerogative. They were to seek opportunity to introduce Episcopacy in New England—thus the Dutch minister in London was led to understand, while deceived as to the design on New Netherland. Upon the strength of this information the West India Company wrote to Stuyvesant, April 21, 1664, as follows: "His Royal Majesty of Great Britain, being inclined to reduce all his kingdoms under one form of government in Church and State, hath taken care that commissioners are ready in England to repair to New England to install bishops there, the same as in old England." But these Instructions had at least a partial reference also to New Netherland, over which Colonel Nicholls was appointed governor, if he conquered it. It was also hoped that he might induce the New England colonies to elect him as their governor. But, as said, it was impracticable to enforce the policy of the king in New Netherland at once. Conciliatory measures at first, to heal the wounded feelings of the conquered, would be the dictate of wisdom. We accordingly find Governor Nicholls, the year after the surrender, directing the city authorities to lay a tax to pay the arrears of salary of the Dutch clergymen.<sup>1</sup> And in 1670 Governor Lovelace writes to certain commissioners at Albany that he considers the minister and church which he and his predecessor found established there as the parochial church of Albany, which was to be maintained by taxation or otherwise.<sup>2</sup> In the same year Lovelace guaranteed a salary to any Dutch minister who would come over to assist Drisius at New York, who was becoming feeble.

<sup>1</sup> "Doc. Hist. N. Y.," vol. i., p. 249; Brodhead's "New York," vol. ii., p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., p. 189.



This offer brought over Domine William van Nieuwenhuysen, the first recruit to the Dutch ministry after the surrender, although seven years had passed away. The governor's promise, however, was not well redeemed.

During this first decade there was also much dissatisfaction expressed because no representative Assembly was granted to the province such as existed in other colonies.

#### RECONQUEST OF NEW YORK BY THE DUTCH, AND ITS RESURRENDER BY THE STATES-GENERAL.

But in 1673 the Dutch unexpectedly regained their independence.<sup>1</sup> In the war then raging between England and Holland, Evertsen was sent with fifteen ships to harass the English in the West Indies. There he met Binckes, with four vessels from Amsterdam. They proceeded to Virginia, where they did considerable damage to English plantations. Learning there that New York was not well defended, the fleet, augmented with several prizes, consisting in all of twenty-three vessels and sixteen hundred men, proceeded thither. Arriving at the Narrows, the sheep and cattle of Governor Lovelace, on Staten Island, afforded them an acceptable breakfast. They were heartily welcomed by their fellow-countrymen. Lovelace was absent. Upon the demand why they had come to disturb his Majesty's subjects, they briefly answered that they had come to take the place. This was easily accomplished, and the flag of Holland again fluttered over New Netherland. During the brief period of reoccupation everything was again put upon a Dutch footing. Names of places were again changed, and the Dutch Church was reestablished. Joyfully did Van Nieuwenhuysen conduct the services in the

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., pp. 199-227; "Doc. Hist.," vol. iii., pp. 45-65; "Amst. Cor.," Letters 165-307.



old stone church in the fort, under the flag of his fatherland, without being followed by an English chaplain. Polhemus was yet ministering on Long Island, and Schaats at Albany. Blom had left Esopus in 1667, and returned home. Drisius had died a few months before. There were only three Dutch ministers in the province. Anthony Colve was appointed governor. The duke's proprietary government was extinguished, as well as that of Carteret and Berkeley in New Jersey. Freedom of religion was granted to all who asked for it.<sup>1</sup> Holland hoped for a brief season that although the colony had languished under the rule of the West India Company it might thrive with new vigor when belonging to the Dutch Republic, and that a worthy Dutch state might yet grow up between the Puritans and Cavaliers to teach genuine lessons of religious liberty. But by the Treaty of Westminster, in 1674,<sup>2</sup> New Netherland was restored to England by the States-General. When this became known there was great indignation in New Netherland. To guard their interests as much as possible, the church asked Governor Colve to reconfirm to them the old stone church in the fort, according to the original articles of surrender. This was done by a formal deed.

On October 27, 1674, before the surrender, Colve requested:<sup>3</sup> "4. That the inhabitants of the Dutch nation may be allowed to retain their customary Church privileges in Divine Service and Church discipline, besides their Fathers' laws and customs in the division of their Inheritances. 5. That they may be excused from Impressment, at least against their own nation."

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. ii., pp. 575-6, 581.

<sup>2</sup> In this same year the old West India Company was finally dissolved. In 1675 a new company was formed on a much reduced basis, and which continued in existence until 1800, when, with the destruction of the republic by the French Revolution, both the East and West India Companies were swept out of existence.

<sup>3</sup> "Doc. Hist. N. Y.," 4to ed., vol. iii., p. 49.

To these Governor Andros replied: "To the 4th. The usual discipline of their Church to bee continued to them as formerly, and the other of Inheritances as farre as I may, and for those that shall desire it. To the 5th, I have neither orders nor directions," etc.

New Netherland now became again the property of the king of Great Britain. He gave a new patent to the Duke of York for the territory before given him. But all these circumstances modified the English claim to the territory by right of discovery, as well as the application of the English legal and ecclesiastical system by virtue of the same. The present validity of the Articles of Surrender of 1664 was also not unquestioned.

#### THE STRUGGLE OF THE DUTCH AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHURCH REPRESENTING A MINORITY (1674-1709).

The temporary loss of the province exerted an evil influence on the English governors. They became more arbitrary. The following is the only passage in the Instructions<sup>1</sup> of Governor Andros (1674-82) on the subject of religion:

"You shall permit all persons of what Religion soever quietly to inhabit within the precincts of your jurisdiction without giving them any disturbance or disquiet whatsoever for or by reason of their differing Opinions in matters of Religion, Provided they give noe disturbance to ye publick peace, nor doe molest or disquiet others in ye free Exercise of their Religion."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> The Test Act, which Parliament forced upon the king in 1673 for the protection of Protestantism, was not made to apply at present to the American plantations. In 1689 William III. extended it, by his own will, by clauses in the Commissions and Instructions to the colonial governors.

This is most general, but in harmony with the designs of Charles and James. Yet the first thing Andros did was to insist upon the Dutch taking the oath of allegiance, without any exception in reference to freedom of religion, or fighting against their own countrymen in time of war.<sup>1</sup> A considerable English population had also come in, and the design of establishing the English Church was becoming increasingly apparent. As early as 1675 Rev. Nicholas van Rensselaer appeared with a recommendation to Governor Andros from the duke for a *living* in one of the Dutch churches. He had been licensed in Holland, indeed, but had joined the train of Charles II. at Brussels, and predicted his restoration to the throne of England. After the restoration, the king in gratitude permitted him to preach to the Dutch congregation at Westminster. He was finally ordained a deacon by the Bishop of Salisbury. On account of the complications of title by the political changes this Van Rensselaer now sought and obtained a grant of the colony of Rensselaerwyck, being a son of the first patroon; but he failed to maintain his right to it. Meantime Governor Andros attempted to foist him on the church of Albany as a colleague of Domine Schaats. He was secretly installed, but an attempt to administer baptism was stoutly resisted. Domine Van Nieuwenhuysen, of New York, went to Albany to defend the rights of the church. Van Rensselaer was finally only permitted to officiate when he promised to submit to the Classis of Amsterdam. The next year, however, the governor was compelled to remove him on account of his scandalous life.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. ii., pp. 740-746—an interesting petition and correspondence on this subject. See also "Doc. Hist. of N. Y.," 4to ed., vol. iii., p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Hist.," vol. iii., p. 225; "Doc. Hist.," vol. iii., pp. 434, 526-8, 530; Smith's "New York," pp. 63, 64; Brodhead's "New York," vol. ii.,



Twelve years had passed away since the original surrender, and only one regular minister had come from Holland. Two had died, and two had returned home. The Episcopalians had only a single clergyman, the chaplain of the troops. The dearth of gospel privileges was severely felt. The Dutch and English of Kingston, therefore, now (1676) petitioned<sup>1</sup> the governor to find means for the ordination of Peter Tesschenmaeker, a young licensed bachelor of divinity of the University of Utrecht. He could use both languages, and had been serving that people. But the governor was wary of meddling so soon again in Dutch church affairs, remembering the matter of Van Rensselaer. No response appears.

Tesschenmaeker now went to Dutch Guiana, or Surinam, for a couple of years, and then he reappears in Delaware. The people of New Castle now request the Dutch clergy to meet as a Classis and ordain him. The ministers were, of course, disposed to help this people to the gospel, and the governor was disposed to strengthen this distant colony. Understanding the general feeling, he now ventured to authorize and direct the Dutch clergy to do this. Accordingly Van Nieuwenhuysen, Schaats, Van Gaasbeek, and Van Zuuren actually formed a Classis (1679) and examined and ordained this proponent as a minister for New Castle; and the proceedings of this first ecclesiastical body higher than a Consistory in New York, and convened at the call of an English governor, were approved by the Classis of Amsterdam.<sup>2</sup> Thirty years later Domines Du Bois and Antonides refused to obey an order of Governor Nicholson to ordain Van Vleck.

In 1677, in a memorial, the Bishop of London complains

index; "Amst. Cor.," Letters 169 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 172; Corwin's "Manual," 1879, pp. 516, 519.

<sup>1</sup> "Doc. Hist.," vol. iii., p. 583.

<sup>2</sup> Letters 178-179, 183, 189.



that the king's right of patronage to present to all benefices and cures of souls is not duly asserted and practiced by the governors in the several plantations.<sup>1</sup> The governor's report of the province in 1678<sup>2</sup> says that ministers are very few, but religions very many; that no account can be given of births or baptisms; that justices are often obliged to perform the marriage ceremony; that there is only one congregation of the Church of England, but that there are several Presbyterian and Independent churches, as well as Quakers, Anabaptists, and Jews. The duke maintained a chaplain. In all there were about twenty churches, of which about one half were without ministers. The people supported their ministers by free gifts amounting to from £40 to £70 per year, besides a house and garden. More than half the churches above alluded to under the name of Presbyterian were Dutch Reformed churches.

Immediately after the arrival of Governor Andros, in 1674, the people had again expressed their earnest desire for a General Assembly of representatives of the people; but the duke opposed it. His laws of 1664 were, however, reënacted. But the liberal government of William Penn, in which the people were allowed representation, made the people of New York (about 1680) clamorous for their rights. In 1682 the duke reluctantly consented. He was stimulated in his apprehension of his duty by the question of his ability to levy a tariff. Dongan was now commissioned<sup>3</sup> as governor (1682-88), and in his Instructions<sup>4</sup> he was authorized to announce the duke's pleasure, and to convene a General Assembly of the people.

Pending this event, the return of Rev. Henry Selyns to America and the arrival of many Huguenots exerted a marked influence on the development and prosperity of the

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> "Doc. Hist.," vol. i., pp. 60-62.

<sup>3</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., p. 328.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 331.

church. Selyns took the place of the departed Van Nieuwenhuysen.<sup>1</sup> He possessed in an eminent degree that rare combination of faculties which unites the zeal of the preacher seeking the salvation of souls with the prudence of the presbyter looking after the temporalities of the flock. He was systematic, energetic, and industrious in his ministerial and pastoral duties. He greatly enlarged the activities of the church, and secured for it a permanent and independent foundation. He was also of a catholic spirit when liberality was not so common, speaking kindly of other denominations and rejoicing in their success. His amiable character endeared him to all around him. He was on terms of friendship with the heads of government, and in correspondence with distinguished men in the neighboring colonies. He was also a poet, versifying in both Latin and Dutch. Cotton Mather remarks of him: "He had so nimble a faculty of putting his devout thoughts into verse that he signalized himself by the greatest frequency, perhaps, which ever man used, of sending poems to all persons, in all places, on all occasions; and in this, as well as upon greater accounts, was a David unto the flocks of our Lord in the wilderness."<sup>2</sup>

In writing to the Classis of Amsterdam (October, 1683) Selyns gave an interesting account of provincial church affairs, alluding to the different churches and ministers then in the country. Tesschenmaecker was at Schenectady; Dellijs, afterward famous in the great land grants, had just come over the sea to become the colleague of Schaats at Albany; Weekstein was at Kingston; and Van Zuuren on Long Island. A stone parsonage<sup>3</sup> was in course of

<sup>1</sup> An act was passed, February 21, 1682, permitting the Church of New York to call Selyns. See also "Amst. Cor.," Letter 222 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

<sup>2</sup> See Hon. H. C. Murphy's "Anthology of New Netherland."

<sup>3</sup> An act was passed November 15, 1682, permitting the building of a parsonage.

erection in New York, "three stories high, and raised on the foundation of unmerited love." Domine Pierre Daillé, late professor at Saumur, was preaching to the Huguenots in New York. "He is full of fire, godliness, and learning. Banished on account of his religion, he maintains the cause of Jesus Christ with untiring zeal." Rev. John Gordon officiated in the fort for the English, and Daillé followed him for the French; but Selyns himself hedged about both these services by two sermons in Dutch. Governor Dongan had recently arrived—a polite and friendly man, who had called on Selyns and informed him that the duke intended to allow full liberty of conscience. "What is to be done for the good of our country and church will be made manifest in the approaching ASSEMBLY, which is summoned to devise reasonable laws for us and our posterity."

The French pastor, Daillé, above alluded to, was the forerunner of a large French immigration. Not a few Huguenots and Walloons had already come over in anticipation of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. This infamous act was, however, a great boon to America. It gave her thousands of excellent citizens representing the intelligence and piety and skill of France.<sup>1</sup> They settled in New York, on Staten Island, at Hackensack, Bushwyck, Harlem, Rye, New Rochelle, and New Paltz. Many of them went to Massachusetts, Virginia, South Carolina, and elsewhere. Huguenot names are famous in our country's history, such as Duché, Laurens, Jay, Boudinot, Bayard, Montague, Du Bois, Le Fevre, Hasbroucq, Bevier, Bleecker, De Lancy, Vermilye, Demarest, Bethune, and perhaps hundreds of others. Rev. Pierre Daillé was called by the New York Consistory, in 1682, to preach to the French. He

<sup>1</sup> See Vermilye's "Huguenot Element among the Dutch," in "Centennial Discourses" (1876); Baird's "Daillé"; Demarest's "Huguenots on the Hackensack"; also "Proceedings of Huguenot Society of America"; Riker's "History of Harlem"; Charles W. Baird's "Huguenots in America."



arrived in 1683, and was the first Huguenot pastor in New York. He had been a professor at the celebrated theological school at Saumur, which was destroyed by order of Louis XIV. in 1683. Besides officiating in New York, whither came the scattered Huguenots on Sundays from a score of miles around, he also went twice a year to New Paltz, to supply that people with the bread of life. Pastor Peiret arrived in 1687, and became a colleague. This gave Daillé the opportunity to itinerate among his scattered countrymen more largely. In 1688 they were numerous and strong enough to build for themselves a house of worship in Marketfield Street in New York. Upon the arrival of De Bon Repos, who took charge of the French on Staten Island and at New Paltz, Daillé accepted a call of the Huguenots in Boston in 1696, where he labored until his death, in 1715. Besides the Dutch ministers who preached occasionally in French, as Michaelius, Drisius, and Selyns, the earlier French pastors were Daillé, Bondet, Vanden Bosch, Peiret, De Bon Repos, Rou, Moulinar, Carle, and Tetard.<sup>1</sup> Several of these French churches and pastors subsequently conformed to the Church of England.

#### THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE CHARTER OF LIBERTIES.

Governor Dongan's commission,<sup>2</sup> dated September 30, 1682, made him governor of New England, New York, and New Jersey. The Instructions<sup>3</sup> given to him (January, 1683) directed him to convene a General Assembly by the votes of the people. This Assembly should consider, in connection with the governor and his council, what laws were necessary for the good of the colony; and if they

<sup>1</sup> For details see Corwin's "Manual," 1879.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., p. 323.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 331.



"shall appear for the manifest good of the country, *and not prejudicial to me*, I will assent unto and confirm them," said the duke. The arrival of Jesuits in New York during Dongan's administration was not agreeable to the people.

On October 17, 1683, the representatives of the people, a large majority of them being Dutch, met for the first time under British rule. They immediately passed the CHARTER OF LIBERTIES, which was approved by the governor. The design was to secure a permanent representative Assembly, to restrict the powers of the governor and to secure the rights of the people. The title was as follows: "For the better establishing the government of this Province of New Yorke, and that Justice and Right may bee equally done to all persons within the same," the charter enacted "That the Supreme Legislative authority, under his Majesty and Royal Highness James, Duke of Yorke, Albany, etc., Lord Proprietor of the said Province, shall forever bee and reside in a Governour, Councill, and THE PEOPLE, mett in a Generall Assembly." In reference to religion it said:

"Thatt no person or persons, which proffesse ffaith in God by Jesus Christ, shall, at any time, be any wayes molested, punished, disquieted or called in question for any difference in opinion or matter of religious concernment, who do nott actually disturbe the civill peace of the province, butt thatt all and every such person or p'sons may, from time, and at all times freely have and fully enjoy, his or her judgments or consciences in matters of religion throughout all the province, they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly, and nott using this liberty to Lycenciousnesse, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others. . . . *And whereas* all the respective Christian Churches now in practice in the Citty of New Yorke, and the other places of this province, do appear to

bee priviledged Churches, and have been so established and confirmed by the former authority of this Government : *Bee it hereby enacted by this present Generall Assembly, and by the Authority thereof*, That all the said respective Christian Churches be hereby confirmed therein, and thatt they and every of them shall, from henceforth forever, be held and reputed as priviledged churches, and enjoy all their former freedoms of their religion in divine worship and church discipline; . . . *Provided allso*, that all other Christian Churches that shall hereafter come and settle within this province shall have the same priviledges." This last clause was intended to admit Romanism.

Taxation only by consent was also incorporated in this charter. This principle Holland had already maintained for more than two centuries. "THE PEOPLE" were also made a constituent part of the Assembly by their chosen representatives.

#### MINISTRY OF DELLIUS.

About this time Godfrey Delliuss was called to Albany (1683-99) as an assistant to Schaats in his declining days. For the first half-dozen years he quietly performed his ministerial duties, but during the subsequent decade he was much entangled in civil affairs. He, in common with all the Reformed clergy, took part against Leisler's administration (1689-91)—of which more anon. He was an earnest teacher of the Mohawk Indians. After the Leisler troubles he was on the point of embarking for Europe, but Governor Sloughter urged him to remain. He complied, especially, as he said, for the sake of continuing his labors among the poor Indians, who expressed their gratitude to the governor for his effort to retain him. The government allowed him £60 per year for teaching them. He,

like Domine Megapolensis before him, greatly restrained their ferocities toward their French prisoners. Father Milet, when a prisoner among the Oneidas, was saved much suffering through Dellius's influence. Milet, while a captive, wrote him several letters. Father Dablon, another Jesuit missionary in Canada, warmly thanked him for his services, and offered to secure him pecuniary compensation for his kindness from any port of France which he might name. Dellius also corresponded with Governor Fletcher about the French and English difficulties. Each nation sought to monopolize the fur-trade with the Indians of central New York. He was often, also, a civil agent to the Indians, and had a remarkable power over them. With the conclusion of peace in Europe between the English and French, Dellius and Peter Schuyler were sent as agents to Canada, to Count de Frontenac (April, 1698), to announce the peace and bring to an end provincial hostilities. They took with them nineteen French prisoners, and secured the delivery of those held by the French. This was done under the authority of Governor Bellomont.

We cannot enter into the complicated land-grant questions in which he now became involved. Governor Bellomont took part against him, but Rev. Mr. Vesey prayed for him by name, in Trinity Church, that God would deliver him from his enemies. Seven hundred pounds were raised by his friends to send him to England to defeat certain legislation concerning the grants of lands in question. The Classis of Amsterdam sent a formal complaint to the Bishop of London concerning Governor Bellomont's treatment of Dellius. He also carried with him numerous certificates vindicating the propriety of his conduct, the two French Reformed clergymen and the Rev. Mr. Vesey giving theirs among the rest. The Bishop of London ex-



pressed his regret that so useful a man as Delliuss had been interrupted in his ministry by Bellomont.

#### REPEAL OF THE CHARTER OF LIBERTIES.

With the passage of the Charter of Liberties everything looked favorable for the greatest religious freedom in New York. All acts of the Assembly, after the governor's signature, were valid unless vetoed by the duke. The "Charter of Franchises and Priviledges" was sent to the duke. In May, 1684, he wrote to Dongan favorably concerning it, and said that if amendments were made they would be more advantageous to the people. On October 4, 1684, James actually signed it. It was ordered to be sent to New York to be put on record. But just at this juncture, before it was sent, Charles II. died and James became king, and everything was changed.

The question now arose whether the English system of representation in Parliament should prevail in America, or whether the colonists should be governed directly by the crown. Popular assemblies had been permitted in many of the colonies; but with the accession of James opposite counsels began to prevail. The New York charter had not been perfected by delivery and registry. Its transmission was now suspended. For twenty years New York had been a dukedom; now it became a royal province. The charter sounded differently to the *king*. It seemed to give more privileges to New York than any other province enjoyed. That "*the people*" were recognized as a joint factor in the government sounded novel to the *king*. No other American constitution had this expression. The *proprietor* was now the *sovereign*. It did not seem proper that New York's Charter of Liberties should be confirmed by the king. But it is to be observed that he did not at present



veto it; it remained yet in force. In the secret Instructions sent to Governor Dongan from James as king (May 29, 1686), he finally repealed the Charter of Liberties:

“ 12. And whereas wee have been presented with a Bill or Charter passed in ye late Assembly of New York, containing several ffranchises, privileges, & Immunitys mentioned to be granted to the Inhabitants of our <sup>sd</sup> province, You are to Declare Our Will and pleasure that y<sup>e</sup> said Bill or Charter of Franchises bee forthwith repealed & disallowed, as y<sup>e</sup> same is hereby Repealed, determined & made void;” but they were to continue the duties and impositions mentioned in said charter.

His Instructions in reference to religious matters are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

“ 31. You shall take especiall care that God Almighty bee devoutly and duely served throughout yor Government: the Book of Common Prayer, as it is now established, read each Sunday and Holyday, and the Blessed Sacrament administered according to the Rites of the Church of England. You shall be careful that the Churches already built there shall bee well and orderly kept and more built as ye Colony shall, by God’s blessing, bee improved. And that besides a competent maintenance to bee assigned to ye Minister of each Church, a convenient House bee built at the Comôn charge for each Minister, and a competent Proportion of Land assigned him for a Glebe and exercise of his Industry.

“ 32. And you are to take care that the Parishes bee so limited & settled as you shall find most convenient for ye accomplishing this good work.

“ 33. Our will and pleasure is that noe minister bee preferred by you to any Ecclesiastical Benefice in that Our

<sup>1</sup> “ Col. Docs.,” vol. iii., pp. 369–375.

Province, without a Certificate from ye most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury of his being conformable to ye Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England, and of a good life & conversation.

“ 34. And if any person preferred already to a Benefice shall appear to you to give scandal either by his Doctrin or Manners, you are to use the best means for ye removal of him; and to supply the vacancy in such manner as wee have directed. And alsoe our pleasure is that, in the direction of all Church Affairs, the Minister bee admitted into the respective vestrys.

“ 35. And to th’ end the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the said Archbishop of Canterbury may take place in that Our Province as farr as conveniently may bee, wee doe think fitt that you give all countenance and encouragement in ye exercise of the same; excepting only the Collating to Benefices, granting licenses for Marriage, and Probat of Wills, which wee have reserved to you our Govr & to ye Commander in cheif for the time being.

“ 36. And you are to take especial care, that a Table of marriages established by ye Canons of the Church of England, bee hung up in all Orthodox Churches and duly observed.

“ 37. And you are to take care that Books of Homilys & Books of the 39 Articles of ye Church of England bee disposed of to every of ye said Churches, & that they bee only kept and used therein.

“ 38. And wee doe further direct that noe Schoolmaster bee henceforth permitted to come from England & to keep school within Our Province of New-York, without the license of the said Archbishop of Canterbury; And that noe other person now there or that shall come from other parts, bee admitted to keep school without your license first had.

"39. You are to take care that Drunkenness and Debauchery, Swearing and blasphemy bee severely punisht; And that none bee admitted to publick trust & Employmt whose ill fame & conversation may bring scandal there-upon. . . .

"42. You shall permit all persons of what Religion soever quietly to inhabit within yor Government without giving them any disturbance or disquiet whatsoever for or by reason of their differing Opinions in matters of Religion, Provided they give noe disturbance to ye publick peace, nor doe molest or disquiet others in ye free Exercise of their Religion."

Such Instructions, coming from the Catholic James, who was "Defender of the Faith" of Episcopalians, and directed to a Catholic governor, for the establishment of the Church of England in a colony the vast majority of which were Dutch Presbyterians and the rest English dissenters—except a handful of Episcopalians, who had not a church edifice in the whole province—all these circumstances constitute a combination sufficiently ludicrous. The archbishop<sup>1</sup> would hardly be called upon to give many certificates. And the last article (42) of the Instructions to Dongan, which might be commended as giving universal toleration, loses its character when we learn that, contrary to his oath, it was intended to pave the way for Catholicism. Religious toleration was almost perfect in New York under Dongan. Several Jesuit fathers lived there, and Dongan had his own chapel and worship. He tried to establish colonies of Catholics at Saratoga and in central New York, and to send English priests to the Indians. One of the fathers attempted a Latin school in New York.

<sup>1</sup> The Archbishop of Canterbury here takes the place of the Bishop of London, because said Bishop (Compton) had offended James by opposing his abrogation of the Test Act.



But none of these efforts succeeded. It was Dongan, however, who gave charters to New York and Albany in 1686.

Some of these Instructions, however, had a specially humane tendency: "60. You shall pass a Law for the Restraining of Inhuman Severitys which by all masters or overseers may be used toward their Christian servants or slaves." The willful killing of Indians or negroes was to be punished by death, and a penalty was to be fixed for maiming them. The governor was also directed to find out the best means to facilitate and encourage the conversion of negroes and Indians. A severe censorship was exercised over the press. At this time the population of New York was about eighteen thousand.

About this time a notion arose in several of the plantations that negroes ought not to be baptized, because baptism would make them *ipso facto* free. James insisted that negroes should be baptized, and that it was impiety in their masters to prevent it. This duty was often referred to in subsequent instructions to governors, and the duty was made to apply to Indians also. The records of all the older Dutch churches, however, show that the practice was common in them. Negroes were formally married and their children brought for baptism.

Dongan's Commission from James as king was a couple of weeks later than the Instructions above alluded to. It is dated June 10, 1686. It thus refers to religion:

"And wee doe, by these presents authorize and empower you to collate any person or persons in any churches, chapells, or other Ecclesiastical Benefices within our said Province and Territorys aforesaid as often as any of them shall happen to bee void."<sup>1</sup>

"And wee doe by these presents will, require and com-

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Hist.," vol. iii., p. 379.



mand you to take all possible care for the Discountenance of Vice and encouragement of Virtue and good living, that by such example the Infidels may bee invited and desire to partake of the Christian Religion."<sup>1</sup>

It was not until January, 1687, that Dongan issued his proclamation that the General Assembly was dissolved by order of the king. He and his council now assumed all authority. New York was again a helpless, conquered province. Its people had no voice in taxation. The condition was a sure forerunner of revolution.

Dongan made a report this same year of the state of the province. He said that in seven years not more than twenty families had come over from Great Britain. On Long Island the population increased rapidly. Many French families were coming over, and several Dutch families had come. On account of so many foreigners, he said, it was important to unite New York and New England. He continues: "Every town ought to have a minister. New York has, first, a Chaplain<sup>2</sup> belonging to the Fort, of the Church of England; secondly, a Dutch Calvinist;<sup>3</sup> thirdly, a French Calvinist;<sup>4</sup> fourthly, a Dutch Lutheran.<sup>5</sup> Here bee not many of the Church of England; few Roman Catholicks; abundance of Quaker preachers, men and Women especially; Singing Quakers; Ranting Quakers; Sabbatarians; Anti-Sabbatarians; some Anabaptists; some Jews: in short, of all sorts of opinions there are some, and the most part of none at all. The Great Church which serves both the English and the Dutch is within the Fort, which is found to be very inconvenient. Therefore, I desire that there may bee an order for their building another; ground being already layd out for that purpose, and they not wanting

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Hist.," vol. iii., p. 381.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Alexander Innis.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. Pierre Daillé.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. Henry Selwyns.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. Bernard Arensius.

money in store wherewithall to build it. The most prevailing opinion is that of the Dutch Calvinists. It is the endeavor of all persons here to bring up their children and servants in that opinion which themselves profess; but this I observe, that they take no care of the conversion of their slaves. Every town and county are obliged to maintain their own poor, which makes them bee soe careful, that noe vagabonds, beggars, nor idle persons are suffered to live here. But as for the King's natural-born subjects that live on Long Island and other parts of Government, I find it a hard task to make them pay their ministers."<sup>1</sup>

Upon the death of Dongan the authority of Andros, who had been governor of New England since 1686, was extended over New York and New Jersey. In his Commission (April 7, 1688) nothing is said about religion. In the accompanying Instructions (April 16, 1688), respecting this extension of his authority only the following is found:<sup>2</sup>

"You are to take care that drunkenness and debauchery, swearing and blasphemy, be severely punished; and that none be admitted to publick trusts and imployments whose ill fame and conversation may bring a scandall thereupon.

"You are to permitt a liberty of conscience in matters of religion to all persons, so they be contented with a quiet and peaceable enjoymt of it, pursuant to our gracious declaration bearing date the fourth day of April, in the third year of our reign; wch you are to cause to be duly observed and put in execution."

But there was no honor in James II. All parties finally united against his political and spiritual despotism. He was deposed, and William of Orange, who had married Mary, the oldest daughter of James, was invited to save English liberty and Protestantism. He was brought up

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., pp. 389-417, 419, 420; vol. ix., pp. 309, 312.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., pp. 546, 557.

in the Reformed Church of Holland, and was very tolerant in matters of church government and modes of worship; hence he could easily become an Episcopalian. In a year the ACT OF TOLERATION was passed, and received the royal signatures. But it failed to include Unitarians and Roman Catholics. While far from an ideal law, it was a great advance in the right direction. But this beginning of liberty of conscience in England was to be accompanied by a very peculiar and unfortunate episode in New York.

#### EPISODE OF THE LEISLER TROUBLES (1689-91).

New York was now composed of a heterogeneous population. It was chiefly Dutch, but there was a large French and English element. None of these particularly loved James. He was a Roman Catholic. He had, as king, annulled the Charter of Liberties which, as proprietor, he had given them. The secret design of James to impose Romanism, if possible, both on England and the colonies was a constant terror to the English settlers. The Huguenots<sup>1</sup> equally feared his schemes as well as the possible success of a French invasion from Canada. If Count Frontenac were successful the Huguenot refugees were to be shipped back to France for punishment. The burning of Schenectady by the French and Indians in 1690 was an awful corroboration of their fears. But if James succeeded in his popish schemes, or Frontenac succeeded in French conquests, the Dutch were also sure to suffer. What wonder that all were anxious, and that with the enforced abdication of James all parties were wild with joy! The accession of William and Mary was hailed as a day of freedom. New Netherland had been conquered, indeed, by the English, but England herself had now a Dutch king.

1 "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., pp. 420, 650; vol. ix., p. 309.



But all the civil officials of New York were yet the creatures of James. This was almost unendurable.

The people waited for dispatches appointing new officials, but they did not come. The officials and the people were in awkward relations. The citizens of Boston soon settled the matter by arresting Governor Andros, who had been a willing tool of James in all his despotic acts, and appointing a Committee of Safety. The news of this circumstance did not allay the excited feelings of the heterogeneous population of New York. Nicholson was the lieutenant-governor of New York under Andros. His councilors—Philipse, Van Courtland, and Bayard—had also been appointed by James. Ought these to be allowed to govern, when the king whom they represented had been deposed, and his governor was a prisoner? Why should there not be a Committee of Safety also in New York? Should the representatives of a defunct papal king hold the fort of a Protestant prince?

The dismissal of a sentinel by Nicholson brought on the crisis. The soldiers and the citizens agree that the fort must be held by the friends of William, their Dutch king. Nicholson fled, leaving what power he could in the hands of his councilors. The counties elected a Committee of Safety, and Colonel Jacob Leisler was appointed captain of the fort, and, later, military commander of the whole province. But the old councilors stood aloof, and a portion of the more aristocratic element. Leisler, with his party, was recognized by the people generally as the representative of William and Protestantism, while the opposition were declared to stand for James and Romanism. The dangers from Romanism were no doubt greatly exaggerated by the Leislerian party. Leisler now chose councilors from each of the different nationalities in the country.

But from the first, strange to say, the Dutch ministers



stood by the old government. They had been on terms of intimacy with the former civil officials, some of whom were members of their churches. And even when Leisler's government was established *de facto*, they not only opposed it, but preached against his authority. This bitterly excited Leisler and his party. The people generally, in whom was the very instinct of freedom, believed that this was a God-given opportunity to establish a better government, if not to separate church and state. With a Dutch king on the throne in England, what might they not accomplish? And how could they endure the lingering *régime* of James? But the ministers of religion and the people, alas! were on opposite sides, and the results were deplorable. The people refused their ministrations, declined to pay their salaries, and the *de facto* government began to persecute and punish the ministers.

Selyns committed no overt act and was permitted to remain at his post, and was for a time the only Dutch minister on duty in the province. He was, however, in close communication and sympathy with the leaders of the opposition, and was under constant surveillance. His services in the church were interrupted by Leisler himself, and his letters to Holland intercepted.

Domine Delliuss, of Albany, was summoned to appear in New York for failing to recognize Leisler's authority. He secreted himself first in New Jersey and then on Long Island, and was for a time in Selyns's house in New York. He afterward fled to Boston. Leisler charged him with being a principal actor in the French and Indian difficulties, and an enemy of the Prince of Orange, because he refused to recognize the revolution. He styles him a *cockarant* minister. He says that he refused to celebrate thanksgiving day for the accession of William; that he even shut his door when the new king and queen were proclaimed.

Dellius, however, wrote to England explaining the position of the Dutch clergy. He declared that it was not opposition to the Prince of Orange, but an unwillingness to recognize a government thus constituted, and with such a man as Leisler at the head of it.

Domine Varick, of Long Island (1685-94), took similar ground. He restrained himself for a long time, but at length began to denounce Leisler. He found it necessary to flee to Delaware. On his return he was charged with being acquainted with a design to rescue the fort from Leisler. He was dragged by a force of armed men from his house, and kept in confinement in the fort for six months (1690-91). He was charged, also, with speaking treasonable words against Leisler, and was sentenced to pay a fine of £80 by De la Noy, and to be deposed from ministerial functions and kept in prison until the fine was paid. Domine Selyns, with great magnanimity, offered himself and property as bail for Varick when he was first imprisoned; but he was refused and threatened with imprisonment himself. Varick was at length released without the payment of the fine, but he ultimately died from the effects of his ill treatment.

It was a great mistake in the old councilors, and especially in the ministers, not to accept of the action of the Committee of Safety for the time being. The ministers were certainly friends of King William, and must have rejoiced in the overthrow of James. But the exact facts of the revolution were left in considerable uncertainty for a long time by the failure of speedy dispatches. Meantime the ministers, in their over-prudence, and perhaps influenced by social reasons, stood by the old government, and became committed, in a measure, to sustain Nicholson's councilors. They also believed Leisler quite unfitted for the position, which was no doubt true. But Leisler was

not a usurper, as has been generally said and believed, but was put at the head of affairs by the Committee of Safety, and even received quasi-recognition by King William.

Sloughter was finally appointed governor by William. His captain, Ingoldsby, arriving three months before him, by the advice of the old councilors at once demanded the surrender of the fort. But Ingoldsby had no credentials to show, and Leisler therefore refused. For this refusal, after the arrival of the governor, Leisler was condemned by his old antagonists on the charge of treason, and executed, with his son-in-law, Milbourne, notwithstanding the efforts of the citizens generally, headed by Rev. Mr. Daillé, to secure their pardon. Their property was also confiscated. Selyns rejoiced over Leisler's downfall, and preached a sermon from the words of the Psalmist, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

The whole affair was afterward reviewed in England, and Queen Mary restored the estates to the families; and a bill was passed by Parliament, not without great opposition,<sup>1</sup> removing the attainder of treason and legalizing Leisler's authority. Fletcher, who was governor at the time, did not obey the act of Parliament respecting the removal of the attainder and the restoration of the property to the family. In 1698 the relatives asked Lord Bellomont, then governor, for permission to take up the bodies, which were buried near the gallows, and give them Christian burial in the Dutch church.<sup>2</sup> Partly out of compassion for the injustice done them and partly to show the power of English law, Bellomont had their bodies exhumed, and, with great parade, although against the protests of the Consistory and all the clergy of the city of all denominations, buried under the floor of the Dutch church in Garden

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 400, 401.



Street.<sup>1</sup> The dispute on these matters continued for many years, to the great injury of religion,<sup>2</sup> the province being divided into two parties, Leislerians and anti-Leislerians.

In the burning of Schenectady, above alluded to, Domine Tesschenmaecker lost his life. The French were seeking to gain control of the Indian trade, and had carefully planned the capture of Albany and New York in 1690. The earlier part of the plan was not wholly carried out, but a party of French and Indians left Montreal, and, proceeding by the way of Lake Champlain, intended to attack Albany. The Indian chiefs not consenting, they turned off toward Schenectady. Orders were given that the domine's life should be spared on account of the information he could give them. But his house was not known, and before he could be personally recognized he was slain and his house and papers burned. His head was cloven open and his body burned to the shoulder-blades. This took place on a Saturday night at midnight. Sixty persons lost their lives.

<sup>1</sup> For heads of accusation against Bellomont (1700) for this conduct see "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 620.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 1018. Writers have generally denounced Leisler as a usurper. Brodhead, in his "History of New York," and Hon. Henry C. Murphy, in his "Anthology of New Netherland," take this view, which was also adopted in the "Manual" of 1879. See also "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., pp. 667-684, 716, 717, 738-753. But Dr. A. G. Vermilye, in an address before the Oneida Historical Society in 1891, has completely overthrown these views and unanswerably vindicated Leisler. The same article is reprinted in "Memorial History of New York," vol. i., p. 453.



## CHAPTER III.

### WILLIAM III. (1688-1702).

THE era of enforced religious uniformity ceased in England with the expulsion of the Stuarts and William's Act of Toleration (1689). Protestant dissenters were to be *tolerated!* But religious freedom in the colonies now seemed to lose ground. The freedom of worship granted by James in his "Duke's Laws" (1664-85) and in his royal Instructions (1685-88) had an ulterior object in view, as we have seen. He was himself a papist. He nullified the Test Acts relating to popery as far as he could, and his apparent liberality was chiefly intended to facilitate the introduction of popery in New York. This judgment is warranted by the facts and the character of the man. But in William the Protestant succession is restored, and the regular policy of extending the English ecclesiastical system is resumed, and New York is to enjoy the benefit! But there is another side to the question. Will the Dutch and other non-episcopal bodies permit a church to be established which represents hardly a tithe of the inhabitants?

Governor Sloughter (March-July, 1691) brought over with him a Commission from William to restore the Assembly, which James had taken away. It was accordingly reorganized in 1691. His Commission<sup>1</sup> and Instructions,"

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., p. 623.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 688, 689.

so far as they relate to religion, were almost identical with those of James to Governor Dongan, except the forty-second paragraph, which is omitted. (See page 85.) The "competent maintenance to be allowed to the minister of each *orthodox*<sup>1</sup> Church" seemed an almost harmless addition, but subsequently was understood in a limited sense.<sup>2</sup> The American provinces were now again placed under the care of the Bishop of London instead of the Archbishop of Canterbury. If these Instructions were enforced, all ministers in Dutch churches, and schoolmasters even, could be installed only upon presenting a certificate from the said bishop. But it was seldom policy to attempt to enforce all the suggestions in these Instructions. They had not the force of law.

The following paragraphs are added<sup>3</sup> to these Instructions of William to Sloughter, which are not found in those of James to Dongan:

"You shall administer, or cause to be administered, the Oaths appoint<sup>d</sup> by Act of Parliament, instead of the Oaths of allegiance and Supremacy, and the Test, to the members and officers of our Councill, to all Judges and Justices, and all other Persons that hold any office in our said Province by vertue of any Patent under our Great Seal of England or our Seal of our Province of New York.

"You are to permit a liberty of Conscience to all Persons (except Papists), so they be contented with a quiet and Peaceable enjoyment of it, not giving offence or scandall to the Government."

Thus the Test Act of 1673 was restored. This act required, besides oaths of allegiance and supremacy to the king, the partaking of the sacrament according to the Eng-

<sup>1</sup> See paragraph 31 of Dongan's Instructions, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. v., p. 135; vol. vii., p. 347, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 689.

lish Episcopal form, and signing a declaration against the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation.

#### THE MINISTRY ACT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

In accordance with this general policy the governor proposed in 1691 the passage of an act for the proper maintenance of a minister<sup>1</sup> in every town where there were forty families or more. A bill was prepared which reflected the views of the governor. But the Assembly considering that the towns were already fairly well supplied with ministers, the bill was rejected. A similar bill was presented in 1692, which met with a similar fate. Sloughter died suddenly in July, 1691.

Governor Fletcher arrived in September, 1692. His Commission<sup>2</sup> and Instructions<sup>3</sup> were the same, substantially, as his predecessor's on religious matters. Immediately on his arrival he renewed the recommendation to the Assembly to pass a bill for settling a ministry. The Assembly, however, which was overwhelmingly Dutch, was not as docile as the governor expected. They loved the Dutch language and the polity of the Church of Holland. Nothing was accomplished. In March, 1693, the governor warmly rebuked them for not acceding to his wishes. He said:<sup>4</sup> "Gentlemen, the first thing that I did recommend to you at our last meeting was to provide for a ministry, and nothing is done in it. There are none of you but what are big with the privileges of Englishmen and Magna Charta, which is your right; and the same law doth provide for the religion of the Church of England, against Sabbath-breaking and all other profanity. But as you have made it last and postponed it this session, I hope

<sup>1</sup> Council "Journal," p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 818-824.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iii., p. 827.

<sup>4</sup> Council "Journal," p. 35.

you will begin with it the next meeting, and do somewhat toward it effectually."

At the next session (September, 1693) he accordingly made another attempt to secure the passage of a Ministry Act for the whole colony, including the erection of an English chapel in New York City. In his message to the Assembly he says:<sup>1</sup> "I recommended to the former Assembly the settling of an able ministry, that the worship of God may be observed among us, for I find that great and first duty very much neglected. Let us not forget that there is a God who made us, who will protect us if we serve him. This has been always the first thing I have recommended, yet the last in your consideration. I hope that you are all satisfied of the great necessity and duty that lies upon you to do this, as you expect his blessings upon your labors."

The persistence of the governor induced the house at last (September 12, 1693) to appoint a committee of eight to prepare a bill. It was modeled more or less closely upon Graham's bill of the year before, as that had been on Sloughter's. When presented to the Assembly it was debated for a week, and amended; and when finally adopted it was limited in its application *to certain parishes in only four counties out of the ten counties of the province*. It was also entirely unsectarian, having no special application to one denomination more than to another. When sent to the governor he returned it with the artful request to amend it, so as to invest him with the episcopal power of inducting all ministers into their offices, by adding after the first sentence of Article VI. these words: "And presented to the governor to be approved and collated." But the house refused to accept of this suggestion. They declared that "in the drawing of the bill they had had a due

<sup>1</sup> Council "Journal," p. 42.



regard to that pious intent of settling a ministry for the benefit of the people." This exasperated Fletcher, and he at once broke up their session in an angry speech. Among other things he said:<sup>1</sup> "Gentlemen, there is also a bill for the settling of a ministry in this city and some other counties of the government. In that thing you have shown a great deal of stiffness. You take upon you as if you were dictators. I sent down to you an amendment of three or four words in that bill, which, though very immaterial, yet was positively denied. . . . It seems very unmannerly. There never was an amendment yet desired by the Council Board but what was rejected. It is the sign of a stubborn ill temper. . . . But, gentlemen, I must take leave to tell you, if you seem to understand that none can serve without your collation or establishment, you are far mistaken; for I have the power of collating or suspending any minister in my government by their Majesties' letters patent,<sup>2</sup> and whilst I stay in the government I will take care that neither heresy, sedition, schism, nor rebellion be preached among you, nor vice and profanity encouraged. . . . You ought to consider that you have but a third share in the legislative power of the government, and ought not to take all upon you, nor be so peremptory. You ought to let the Council have a share. They are in the nature of a House of Lords, or upper house; but you seem to take the whole power in your hands, and set up for everything. You have set a long time to little purpose, and have been a great charge to the country. Ten shillings a day is a large allowance, and you punctually exact it. You have been always forward enough to pull down the fees of other ministers in the government. Why

<sup>1</sup> Council "Journal," p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> In 1707 Lewis Morris argued that the Assembly was not bound by the royal Instructions to the governor. "Col. Docs.," vol. v., p. 19.

did you not think it expedient to correct your own to a more moderate allowance? . . . I shall say no more at present but that you do withdraw to your private affairs in the country. I do prorogue you to the tenth of January next [1694].”

The following is the act:

“AN ACT FOR SETTLING A MINISTRY, AND RAISING A MAINTENANCE FOR THEM IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, COUNTY OF RICHMOND, WESTCHESTER AND QUEEN’S COUNTY. PASSED SEPTEMBER 22, 1693. (CHAPTER 33.)

“WHEREAS, Profaneness and Licentiousness hath of late overspread this province, for Want of a settled Ministry throughout the same: to the End the same may be removed, and the Ordinances of GOD duly administered;

“I. Be it enacted *by the Governor, and Council, and Representatives convened in General Assembly, and by the Authority of the same*, That in each of the respective Cities and Counties hereafter mentioned and expressed, there shall be called, inducted, and established, a good sufficient Protestant Minister, to officiate, and have the Care of Souls, within one Year next, and after the Publication hereof, *that is to say*; In the City of *New York*, One; in the county of *Richmond*, One; in the county of *Westchester*, Two;—One to have the Care of *Westchester, Eastchester, Yonkers*, and the Manor of *Pelham*; the Other to have the Care of *Rye, Mamarenock, and Bedford*; in *Queen’s County*, Two; One to have the Care of *Jamaica*, and the adjacent Towns and Farms; the Other to have the Care of *Hamstead*, and the next adjacent Towns and Farms.

“II. And for their respective Encouragement, Be it further enacted, *by the authority aforesaid*, That there shall be annually, and once in every Year, in every of the respective Cities and Counties aforesaid, assessed, levied,

collected, and paid, for the Maintenance of each of their respective Ministers, the respective Sums hereafter mentioned; *that is to say*; For the City and County of *New York*, *One Hundred Pounds*; for the two Precincts of *Westchester*, *One Hundred Pounds*, to each *Fifty Pounds*, to be paid in Country Produce, at Money Price; for the County of *Richmond*, *Forty Pounds*, in Country Produce, at Money Price; and for the two Precincts of *Queen's county*, *One Hundred and Twenty Pounds*, to each *Sixty Pounds*, in Country Produce, at Money Price.

“ III. And for the more orderly Raising the respective Maintenances for the Ministers aforesaid, Be it further enacted, *by the authority aforesaid*, That the respective Justices of every City and County aforesaid, or any Two of them, shall every Year, issue out their Warrants to the Constables, to summons the Freeholders of every City, County, and Precinct aforesaid, together, on the second Tuesday of *January*, for the chusing of Ten Vestry-Men, and two Church-Wardens; and the said Justices and Vestry-Men, or major Part of them, are hereby impowered, within Ten Days after the said Day, or any Day after, as to them shall seem convenient, to lay a reasonable Tax on the said respective Cities, Counties, Parish, or Precincts for the Maintenance of the Minister and Poor of their respective Places; and if they shall neglect to issue their Warrants, so as the Election be not made that day, they shall respectively forfeit *Five Pounds* current Money of this Province: And in Case the said Freeholders duly summoned, as aforesaid, shall not appear, or appearing, do not chuse the said Ten Vestry-Men and two Church-Wardens, that then in their Default, the said Justices shall, within Ten Days after the said second Tuesday, or on any Day after, as to them shall seem convenient, lay the said reasonable Tax, on the said respective Places, for the respective Mainte-



nances aforesaid ; And if the said Justices and Vestry-men shall neglect their Duty herein, they shall respectively forfeit *Five Pounds*, current Money, aforesaid.

“ IV. And be it further enacted, *by the Authority aforesaid*, That such of the Justices and Vestry-Men, that shall not be present at the time appointed, to make the said Taxes, and therefor be convicted, by a certificate under the Hands of such as do appear, and have no sufficient Excuse for the same ; shall respectively forfeit *Five Pounds*, current Money aforesaid : And a Roll of the said Tax so made, shall be delivered into the Hands of the respective Constables of the said Cities, Counties, Parishes, and Precincts, with a warrant signed by any two Justices of the Peace, empowering him or them to levy the said Tax ; and upon Refusal, to distrain, and sell by public Outcry, and pay the same into the Hand of the Church-Wardens, retaining to himself Twelve Pence per Pound, for levying thereof : And if any Person shall refuse to pay what he is so assessed, and the said Constables do strain for the same ; all his charges shall be paid him, with such further allowance for his Pains, as the said Justices, or any of them, shall judge reasonable ; And if the said Justice or Justices, shall neglect to issue the said Warrant, he or they respectively shall forfeit *Five Pounds* current Money aforesaid ; and if the said Constables, or any of them fail of their Duty herein, they shall respectively forfeit *Five Pounds* current Money aforesaid. And the Church-Wardens so chosen, shall undertake the said Office and receive and keep a good account of the Monies or Goods levied by Virtue of this Act, and the same issue by Order from the said Justices and Vestry-Men of the respective Cities, Counties, Precincts, and Parishes aforesaid, for the Purposes and Interests aforesaid, and not otherwise : And the Church-Warden shall, as often as thereunto required, yield and give a just and true ac-



count unto the Justices and Vestry-Men, of all their Receipts and Disbursements; And in case the said Church-Wardens, or any of them, shall neglect their Duty therein, they shall respectively forfeit *Five Pounds*, current Money aforesaid, for every Refusal.

“ V. And be it further enacted, *by the Authority aforesaid*, That the said Church-Wardens, in their respective Precincts aforesaid, shall, by Warrant, as aforesaid, pay unto the respective Ministers, the Maintenance aforesaid, by four equal and quarterly payments, under the Penalty and Forfeitures, of *Five Pounds*, current Money aforesaid, for each Neglect, Refusal, or Default; the one Half of all which Forfeitures, shall be disposed of to the Use of the Poor, in the respective Precincts, where the same doth arise, and the other Half to him or them that shall prosecute the same.

“ VI. Always provided, and be it further Enacted, *by the Authority aforesaid*, that all and every of the respective Ministers, that shall be settled in the respective Cities, Counties, and Precincts aforesaid, shall be called to officiate in their respective Precincts, by the respective Vestry-men, and Church-Wardens aforesaid. And, *Always Provided*, That all the former Agreements, made with Ministers throughout this Province, shall continue and remain in their full Force and Virtue; anything contained herein to the contrary hereof, in any wise notwithstanding.”

This was the best act which the governor could extort from the restored Assembly, and it was a great disappointment to him. The Assembly did not mean to establish the Church of England, and they did not do it. This act did not receive the royal confirmation until May 11, 1697,<sup>1</sup> five days after the date of the charter of Trinity Church.

<sup>1</sup> “ Col. Docs.,” vol. vi., p. 21.

The immediate circumstances which led Fletcher to press this bill so earnestly at this time are thus given by Colonel Morris, himself a churchman, in writing to John Chamberlayne, Esq., in 1711. He says:<sup>1</sup>

“ In Coll. Fletcher’s time, one Party of the Dissenters, in the county where Jamaica is, resolved to build a church, and in order to it, got subscriptions and materials enough to build it about three foot from the ground; but finding themselves unable to perfect it without the assistance of the rest, which could not be got by persuasion, they resolved to attempt the getting an Act of Assembly in their favor. Coll. Fletcher, who was then governor, and James Graham, Esq., then Speaker of the Assembly, perceiving the Assembly inclined to raise money for the building of that church, and settling a maintenance for ministers, thought it a fit opportunity to do something in favor of the Church, before the zealous fit left them. Accordingly Graham, who had the drawing of their Bills, prescribed a method of induction, and so managed it that it would not do well for the Dissenters and but lamely for the Church, tho’ it would do with the help of the Governor, and that was all; but it was the most could be got at that time, for had more been attempted the Assembly had seen through the Artifice, being most of them Dissenters, and all had been lost. By virtue of this Act the church was built, and a dissenting minister called, and (if I mistake not) Paid. The other dissenters, who were forced to comply, were very much dissatisfied at this Procedure of their Brethren, and many of them appeared in the Interest of the Church, thinking no way so effectual to defeat their adversaries; and this was the beginning of the Church of England in Jamaica on Long Island. . . .

“ The Act to settle the Church is very loosely worded,

<sup>1</sup> “ Col. Docs.,” vol. v., p. 321. Punctuation is added to facilitate reading.

which (as things stood when it was made) could not be avoided. The Dissenters claim the Benefit of it as well as we, and the Act, without much wresting, will admit a construction in their favor as well as ours; they think it was intended for them, and that they only have a right to it; there is no comparison in our numbers, and they can on the death of an Incumbent call persons of their own persuasion in every place but the City of New York; and if by force the salary is taken from them and paid to the Ministers of the Church, it may be a means of subsisting those Ministers, but they wont make many converts among a people who think themselves very much injured; whereas, let this matter be once regularly determined, and then their mouths are forever stopt, and they'll live in Peace; and then the Church will in all probability flourish, and I believe had at this day been in a much better position, had there been no Act in her favor; for in the Jerseys and Pensilvania, where there is no act, there are four times the number of Church men than there are in this province of N. York; and they are soe, most of them, upon principle, whereas nine parts in ten, of ours, will add no great credit to whatever church they are of; nor can it well be expected otherwise; for as New England, excepting some Families, was the scum of the old, so the greater part of the English in this Province were the scum of the new; who brought as many opinions almost as Persons, but neither Religion nor Virtue, and have acquired very little since."

In 1715 Mr. Morris again writes: "The people were generally dissenters, and averse to the Religion of the Church of England; and when the Act was passed that provided for the Maintenance of Ministers abovesaid, it was to settle an Orthodox Ministry; which words, were a Governor a Dissenter and would induct Dissenters, would be as favorable in favor of them as the Church; and the



people who ne'er could be brought to settle an Episcopal clergy in direct terms fancied they had made an effectual provision for Ministers of their own persuasion by this Act."

Fletcher signed the bill, but at once began to wrest it from its true intent. The very next month, in writing to the Committee of Trade, he implies that the bill meant differently from what its words declare. He says: "I have gott them to settle a fund for a Ministry in the City of New York and three more Countys which could never be obtained before, being a mixt people, and of different perswasions in Religion."<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that it was subsequently assumed in legal instruments that this Ministry Act did establish the Church of England, and that this assumption was frequently incorporated, in an incidental manner, in various acts of the Assembly, until by many it came to be believed.

Two years after the passage of the Ministry Act the vestrymen and churchwardens chosen under the act of 1693 petitioned the Assembly as to the exact meaning of the act. The Assembly declared "that the vestrymen and churchwardens have power to call a dissenting Protestant minister, and that he is to be paid and maintained as the law directs." Governor Fletcher, however, argued against this interpretation, saying, "There is no Protestant Church admits of such officers as Churchwardens and Vestrymen but the Church of England."<sup>2</sup>

REV. JOHN MILLER'S VIEW OF NEW YORK AND ITS  
NECESSITIES (1695).

In 1693 Rev. John Miller arrived as chaplain to the English troops. In February, 1694, he claimed the bene-

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Council "Journal," p. 76.



fit of the Ministry Act. Fletcher was disposed to agree thereto, but the council were unyielding. In 1695 he wrote a monograph upon the condition and necessities of the province for the information of the Bishop of London, to whom it is addressed. He describes the country and its towns, forts, etc., giving maps of the same. He portrays the immoralities of the country; speaks of the deficiency of ministers and churches; that there is sometimes, if the chaplain of the troops is away, not a single minister of the Church of England in the country; that there are many pretended ministers, Presbyterians and Independents, supported by voluntary contributions. He speaks of the great variety of religious opinions; of the successful labors of Delliuss and the Jesuits among the Indians, "though by a method not so exact and prevalent as might be used; . . . the first not being yet established in any good order at all, and the last being converted to popery. I look upon the whole work as yet wholly to be done; and if what has been already done is not a disadvantage to it, yet that little advantage is gained thereby, except a demonstration of the inclination of the Indians to embrace the Christian religion."

He then earnestly advises the sending over of a bishop as a suffragan to the Bishop of London. He should be "a person of an obliging temper and conversation"; should reside in New York as the chief city, where he would be protected by the troops if there were any opposition to his presence; "that his Majesty, uniting the provinces of New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Rhode Island into one government, will please to send him over governor thereof, allowing him all the powers and privileges granted usually to the governors of New York, with power also to go out of his province so often as he shall think good to visit the other provinces as bishop only, and to constitute, not only

for the time of his absence, but, if he see necessary, at other times, a lieutenant-governor under him."

He then suggests that he should be allowed £1500 as governor, out of which he should pay the lieutenant-governor; that he should have "some considerable preferment in England that does not require his personal residence"; that he should have "all licenses of marriage and probates of wills, and other things usually belonging to the bishops in England"; that the "king's farm" should be given to him as "a seat for himself and successors"; that he should be made proprietor of the Mohawk country, which he should settle with a hundred families, and this should descend to his ecclesiastical successors; that a church should be built in New York by contributions of his Majesty, the bishops, and others; that part of the New England revenue for converting the Indians should be given him; that a chaplain should be appointed for the soldiers in Albany; that several young ministers should come over with this suffragan bishop; that he should cause the good laws of England to be put in execution; that ministers should be settled "in those towns already provided for by Act of Assembly"; and that this act should be extended to other towns. He then suggests plans for the conquest of Canada.

He also says that New York had about eight hundred houses, Albany about two hundred, and Kingston about one hundred; that the whole province contained about three thousand families, of which one half were Dutch, a great part of the remainder English, and the rest were French. As to religion, the people were very much divided. The Dutch were wealthy, the English in moderate circumstances, the French were poor. He then gives a table of churches, ministers, and families, which is so instructive that we cannot forbear transcribing it:

## NEW YORK IN 1695.

<i>Counties.</i>	<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers.</i>	<i>Families.</i>
NEW YORK.....	Chapel in the fort..... Dutch Calvinists..... Dutch Lutherans..... French..... Jews' Synagogue..... Harlem [Dutch].....	[Rev. John Miller]..... Dr. Selinus..... ..... Dr. Perot..... Saul Brown..... Dr. Selinus.....	90 450 30 200 20 25 English 40, Dis- senter.
RICHMOND.....	A Meeting House.....	Dr. Bonrepos	English, 40 Dutch, 44 French, 36
KINGS.....	Flatbush. Utrecht. Brookland.	Dr. Varick died Aug. 1694, and another sent for May 27, 1695.	300 or 400, chiefly Dutch.
QUEENS.....	Jamaica } Meeting Hempstead } Houses. Newtown }	Mr. Philips } without Mr. Vesey } any Mr. Mot } orders.	300 or 400 English, most Dissenters, and some Dutch.
SUFFOLK.....	Eight or nine Meeting Houses; almost one at every town.	Seven ministers, Dis- senter, Presbyterian, or Independent. One lately gone to Scot- land.	500 or 600 English, and Dissenters for the most part.
WEST CHESTER..	A Meeting House at West Chester.	A young man coming to settle there, without orders.	200 or 300, English and Dissenters; few Dutch.
ORANGE.....	.....	.....	20, English and Dutch.
DUTCHESS.....	.....	.....	30, English and Dutch.
ULSTER.....	Dutch Calvinist, at Kingstone, for five or six towns.	A minister to come, his books brought; but he missed his passage.	300, Dutch mostly; some English and French.
ALBANY.....	Dutch Calvinist..... Dutch Lutheran..... Scanecthade..... Kinderhoeck.....	Dr. Dellius..... ..... A Dutch minister sent for. .....	400 or 500 Dutch, all Calvinists, ex- cept 12 or 14 Lu- therans.

This gives a complete view of the condition of the province as to religious privileges, and an approximate view of the strength of the religious bodies when the attempt to impose a church establishment of the minority on the colony was made. According to this table the population would be distributed about as follows:

	<i>Families.</i>
Dutch.....	1,754
Dissenters (English).....	1,355
French.....	261
Lutherans.....	45
Episcopalians.....	90
Jews.....	20
Total.....	3,525

By allowing six to a family, which the baptismal records would show to be a very low estimate, the population would be not less than twenty-one thousand. It was probably considerably more.

But the people were not deceived as to the real purpose of the government to establish a church foreign to the beliefs and wishes of almost the whole population. The Dutch church of the city of New York—consisting, with the French, of nearly seven hundred families out of eight hundred and sixty-five—early began operations to forestall these efforts. In December, 1686—the very year in which James became king and repealed the Charter of Liberties—they prepared a petition to the mayor of the city to be allowed to build a church, and asked for the grant of a piece of land. They were yet worshipping in the fort. For some reason this petition was never presented. On April 4, 1688, they petitioned Governor Dongan for a charter, as they could not raise money to buy land unless they were incorporated; but their petition was rejected. Nevertheless they purchased the Garden Street lot in 1692, and at once began the building of a church. It was located on what are now 41-51 Exchange Place, between William and Broad Streets. The land was, at the time, a peach-orchard of the widow of Domine Drisius. The building was of brick, with stone trimmings, and the usual heavy, square Dutch tower projecting from the front.



Over the entrance was the usual Consistory room, and a belfry above. It had three windows on either side, long and somewhat narrow, with small panes, in which were burned the *Arms* of the principal supporters of the church, and there were also escutcheons of the leading families upon the walls. The silver-toned bell of the old church in the fort was transferred to the belfry of the new, together with the pulpit and other furniture. In 1694 the people brought their silver coin and ornaments as offerings, and these were sent to Amsterdam and hammered into a massive baptismal bowl by the skilled artisans of that city. This bowl, with its quaint inscription, now belongs to the South Church, corner of Thirty-eighth Street and Madison Avenue.

Now it was while this church was in course of erection that the Ministry Act was passed. Domine Selyns was not by any means satisfied with the legal status of his church. Her privileges might at any time be destroyed. The Consistory sought legal advice as to their right to possess a charter. This was favorable. On April 18, 1695, they again petitioned for a charter, but it was unsuccessful. On June 19th the petition was renewed, but without success. But on May 11, 1696, the charter was signed. This was not accomplished, however, except through the presentation of a considerable service of plate<sup>1</sup> to the pious governor. Since it is the first church charter in New York, it possesses considerable interest. We give a brief synopsis:

#### THE FIRST CHURCH CHARTER IN NEW YORK.

Beginning with the name and title of the king—"William the Third, by the grace of God, King of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith"—it refers to

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., pp. 427, 463, etc.

the petition of the church to Governor Fletcher for a charter, that they might hold their property securely. The five separate pieces of property owned by the church are then minutely described: (1) The church lot and cemetery on the north side of Garden Street (now Exchange Place), 184 feet front and 84 feet deep; (2) another lot, partly adjoining, on the northwest; (3) a lot on Beaver Street; (4) the manor of Fordham, north of the Harlem River, and stretching from the Hudson River to the Bronx River; (5) a piece of meadow in the Harlem River, and near said manor. Then the petition asking for a charter is again referred to, and the reasons are given for granting said charter: "Now know ye, That in consideration thereof, as well as we being willing in particular favor to the pious purposes of our said loving subjects, and to secure them and their successors in the free exercise and enjoyment of all their civil and religious rights appertaining unto them in manner aforesaid as our loving subjects, and to preserve to them and their successors that liberty of worshipping God according to the constitutions and directions of the Reformed Churches in Holland, approved and established by the National Synod of Dort, have therefore thought fit, and do hereby publish, grant, ordain, and declare, That our royal will and pleasure is, that no person in communion of the said Reformed Protestant Dutch Church within our said city of New York, at any time hereafter, shall be in any ways molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question for any difference in opinion in matters of the Protestant religion, who do not actually disturb the civil peace of our said province; but that all and every person and persons in communion of the said Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, may from time to time, and at all times hereafter, freely and fully have and enjoy his and their own judgments and consciences in matters of the Protest-

ant religious concernments of the said Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, according to the Constitutions and directions aforesaid, they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly, and not using this liberty to licentiousness and profaneness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others, any law, statute, usage, or custom of our realm of England, or of this our province to the contrary hereof in any ways notwithstanding." The church building and cemetery are then confirmed unto the sole "use and behalf of the members of the said Dutch Church" in the city of New York. Rev. Henry Selyns, with Nicholas Bayard, Stephen Cortlandt, William Beeckman, Joannes Kerbyle, elders; and Joannes de Peyster, Jacobus Kipp, Isaac de Forest, and Isaac de Reymer, deacons, are then named as the first incorporators; "and all such others as now are or hereafter shall be admitted into the communion of the said Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in our said city of New York, shall be from time to time, and at all times forever hereafter, a body politic and corporate in fact and name." The usual legal rights and responsibilities are then referred to. The yearly limit of income is fixed at £200. It is then declared "that the patronage, advowson, donation, or presentation of and to the said Church, after the decease of the said first minister, or next avoidance thereof, shall appertain and belong to, and be hereby vested in the Elders and Deacons of the said Reformed Protestant Dutch Church and their successors forever, provided always that all the succeeding ministers, that shall be by them presented, collated, instituted, and inducted" shall be loyal, etc. The Consistory may demise or lease their property for a term "of fifteen years upon a reasonable improved rent, without taking any fine for the same." They may also, "with the consent and advice of the members in full communion of the said church, make



rates and assessments upon all and every of the members in communion" for meeting expenses. The name of the church was to be "The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of the City of New York, . . . To be holden of us, our heirs and successors in free and common socage as of our Manor of East Greenwich in our county of Kent, within our realm of England," paying unto us, on the last day of the annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the annual rent of twelve shillings. The usual legal ending of such documents then follows. "Dated 6th May, 1696."<sup>1</sup> (Patents 7, p. 25, etc.)

#### LETTER OF SELYNS.

Domine Selyns, in writing to the Classis of Amsterdam (September 30, 1696), after referring to his yearly letters, to which he has received no reply in two or three years, saying that the replies have probably been captured by the French; and having also referred to the arrival of Domines Nucella and Lupardus, says: "Our number is now full, consisting of five Dutch Reformed ministers: myself at New York, Dellius at Albany, Nucella at Kingston, Lupardus on Long Island, and Bertholf in New Jersey. The Lord grant that this ministry may prove effectual to the conversion of sinners in this far-distant West!" He then continues in reference to the charter:

"My Consistory and I have for a long time labored and taken much pains to obtain certain privileges for our Reformed Church here. These we have now obtained by a favorable document, confirmed with the King's Seal, entitled, 'The Charter of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in the City of New York,' granted A.D., 1696. Its contents are in respect to the power of calling one or

<sup>1</sup> The Ministry Act of 1693 was not approved until May 11, 1696.



more ministers, of choosing elders, deacons, chorister, sexton, etc., and of erecting Dutch schools, all in conformity to the Church Order of the Synod of Dort; also the right of possessing a parsonage and other Church property, and to hold them in a corporate capacity, without alienation. Also of receiving legacies and donations for the benefit of the Church, etc., etc. This is a circumstance which promises much advantage to God's Church, and quiets the formerly existing uneasiness."

After referring to the more regular payment of his salary lately, he adds: "In the country places here, there are many English preachers, mostly from New England. They were ordained there, having been in a large measure supplied by the University of Cambridge. In July last there were ten graduated in philosophy and eight in higher studies. In the two English churches built, or in course of building (since the building of our new church), there are two Episcopal ministers. They temporarily preach in our church, and with them we live in most friendly relations. Domine Daillé, recently a French minister here, has been called to Boston, and ministers in the French church there. Domine Perrot [Peiret], a man of great learning, formerly a minister in France, serves the church of God here, and Domine Morpe [?] in the adjoining places in the country. Domine Brodet [Bondet], who was formerly professor at Saumur, and who lived among the Indians and preached to them for eight years, is at New Rochelle,<sup>1</sup> twenty miles from here, and is very useful by his ministerial gifts and holy life." After referring to the corruption of morals caused by the war, and the attempted invasion of the French from Canada, he continues: "Our city is extending; large houses are erected,

<sup>1</sup> In 1709 Bondet and his church at New Rochelle conformed to the Church of England.

and the shores are docked in. Since my last coming here [1660-64], the city, houses, and inhabitants have increased fully two thirds."

Selyns now felt that the liberty of the Dutch Church was secure. Other Dutch churches throughout New York and New Jersey from time to time demanded charters and obtained them, but this right was denied to all other denominations except the Episcopalian. Certain individuals now presented a petition, on May 6, 1697, for a charter for Trinity Church. These were not the legally elected churchwardens and vestrymen, but Caleb Heathcote and others.<sup>1</sup> They styled themselves "the present managers of the affairs of the Church of England in New York." On the same day in which the petition was presented the charter was signed. The petition declares that the Ministry Act established the Church of England, and asks for the allowance referred to therein. The wisdom of the Dutch in securing their charter so soon as they did is seen in the character of the charter now granted to Trinity Church. We give a few extracts.

This charter first declares that the Ministry Act of 1693 establishes the Church of England; and this statement is repeated no less than twelve times in this instrument. It declares that at the time of the passage of the Ministry Act there was no church "whereunto such a good sufficient Protestant minister might have been inducted for his officiating of his duty in the public worship and service of God, according to the rights and ceremonies of our Protestant Church of England established by our laws." It refers to the contributions of Fletcher and others for the erection of a church, "that the public worship . . . of God . . . might be more orderly and reverently per-

<sup>1</sup> See Petition in "Doc. Hist.," vol. iii., p. 248, 4to ed.

formed." It asks that the church in course of erection, and the churchyard, 310 feet on the Broadway, and 395 feet along the Hudson River, might be confirmed unto them; and that the £100 which the Ministry Act provides for might be appropriated to said church, and that the adjacent land might be given in trust to the same. The charter then declares that the said church and ground shall be the parish church. The Bishop of London<sup>1</sup> is made the first rector, and his successors are to be the rectors of said church; and the said rector, "with the Inhabitants in communion of the Church of England as now established by our laws," are made a body corporate and politic. "The patronage, advowson, donation, or presentation of or to the said rectory and parish, after the decease of the said first rector, or the next avoidance thereof, shall . . . belong . . . to the churchwardens and vestrymen, . . . and all succeeding rectors . . . shall be presented, collated, instituted, and inducted as other rectors . . . are accustomed to be." The rector, with the advice of the vestrymen and churchwardens, shall from time to time "nominate one able Protestant minister, *in priest's orders*, to reside in said parish, to be preacher and assistant to the said rector and his successors." The churchwardens and vestrymen are authorized to "tax, rate, and assess the yearly sum of £30 upon the inhabitants of the said parish, in communion as aforesaid, for the payment of the preacher's assistant and other expenses." The said church is declared to be the only parish church of our city of New York, and "the said rector of the said parish is a good sufficient Protestant minister, according to the true intent and meaning of the said Act of Assembly" of 1693; and the yearly maintenance of £100 authorized by said act must be paid to him, under the penalties therein contained. If the said

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Henry Compton.



vestrymen and churchwardens fail or refuse to raise said money, they may be prosecuted by the said rector therefor. "And we further declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that nothing herein contained, nor any clause or article herein above mentioned, shall be construed or taken to abridge or take away any right, privilege, benefit, liberty, or license that we have heretofore granted unto any church in communion of our Protestant faith, within our said province of New York, anything contained herein to the contrary hereof in any ways notwithstanding. 6 May, 1697." (Patents 7, p. 82, etc.)

Says Bishop Perry:<sup>1</sup> "It is even now a matter of surprise that this act, . . . establishing the church in the city of New York against the evident intent and will of the Assembly, should have been carried through without eliciting a protest. . . . By the tacit consent of the governor, and evidently without questioning on the part of those concerned, the churchwardens and vestrymen to be elected by the freeholders of the city in accordance with the act of the Assembly of 1693 were superseded by, and found their powers vested in, the churchwardens and vestrymen of Trinity Church, elected by those in communion with the Church of England alone."

The fact is, the Assembly, being mostly Dutch, were so rejoiced over their own charter that they did not oppose any of these claims now made in the charter of Trinity Church.

The adjacent land asked for in the above charter was the "king's farm," which was leased by the governor on

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Perry's "Hist. of the Am. Epis. Ch.," vol. i., p. 162; vol. ii., p. 474.



August 17, 1697, to Trinity Church for seven years.<sup>1</sup> This plot lay between Fulton and Chambers Streets, Broadway and the North River.

Originally it had been known as the "West India Company's farm," which was tilled for the benefit of the company's servants. Upon the English conquest it became the property of the Duke of York, and was known as the "duke's farm." North of this, and extending to Christopher Street, was the domine's *bouwerie* or farm. This was originally conveyed by Governor Van Twiller to Roeloff Jansen, and is the celebrated Anneke Jans property. It was confirmed to her (then the widow of Domine Bogardus) in 1654 by Peter Stuyvesant. Subsequently, by purchase of the heirs of Anneke Jans, or otherwise, the "duke's farm" was extended over the domine's *bouwerie*. In 1685 all this property became known as the "king's farm," when the duke became king. With the accession of Queen Anne (1702) it was called the "queen's farm." The governors enjoyed the benefit of it. But Fletcher's lease of this property to Trinity Church was one of the complaints<sup>2</sup> which was subsequently urged against him. It was said that this lease deprived future governors of many conveniences. Fletcher defends himself<sup>3</sup> by saying that a lease of twenty years granted by Andros (1677-97) had just expired, under a nominal rent of sixty bushels of wheat; that he was offered £200 for a lease of it, but refused. "But inasmuch as a church was then building for the English part of the Colony, and of which it was destitute before my time; I did, for incouragement of that worke, grant a lease thereof to the Church Wardens; it was without fine, at the old reserved rent, and only for seaven years. But

<sup>1</sup> Council "Journal," pp. 235, 240. Confirmed, 1709, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 434.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 448.

if building churches be a crime, I shall take warning how I build any more. I will only add that as I never took one acre of land for myself or children, so had I never any reward for any that was granted."

On January 8, 1698 (1699), Weaver, the agent of the government, writes:<sup>1</sup> "The King's farm was leased out by Colonel Fletcher even when my Lord Bellomont was known to be on his voyage to New Yorke, as most of the other great grants were after the Earl's designation to the government. Colonel Fletcher assumes the glory of building churches, which never was imputed to him as a crime, if it was true; but the Church of New York was not built by him, but by a contribution of several even of the French and Dutch churches, as well as English, and an allowance of £100 per annum given to an English minister by an act of the country, which is levied, the greater part of it, on Dutch and French inhabitants. Therefore there was no necessity to lease the King's farm to the Church-Wardens (which Fletcher did just before Bellomont arrived), nor to call this lease a building of churches, and make that the pretense of hindering a succeeding Governor from the beneficial use of the farm for the conveniency of his family."

In 1699 the Assembly vacated the lease; but Cornbury, a few years later, urged the Assembly to make a permanent grant of the "queen's farm" to Trinity Church. In 1702 Queen Anne, by letters patent, gave said farm to Trinity Church. There were legal difficulties after this which we cannot follow.

The last sentence of Trinity's charter undoubtedly refers to the special rights granted to the Dutch church in the preceding year, as there was no other body to which it could apply. But the charter of Trinity Church practi-

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., pp. 462, 463, 490; vol. v., pp. 23, 390, etc.

cally failed to accomplish the objects attempted, and subsequent legislation was sought, especially in 1704, to remedy the defect, if possible (which see below).

But during all this time a spirit of Christian courtesy prevailed between the Dutch and English clergymen. The Rev. Mr. Vesey, the first minister of Trinity Church, was inducted into office on Christmas day (1697), in the Dutch church in Garden Street. On that occasion Rev. Mr. Selyns, the pastor, and Rev. Mr. Nucella, of Kingston, bore a principal part in the services. Mr. Vesey subsequently officiated in the Dutch church, alternately with the Dutch clergyman, until March 13, 1698, when the building of Trinity Church was completed. This courtesy was returned during the Revolutionary War. The Middle Dutch Church was then desecrated by British soldiery, and the vestry of Trinity passed the following resolution in 1779: "It being represented that the old Dutch Church is now used as a hospital for his Majesty's troops, this corporation, impressed with a grateful remembrance of the former kindness of the members of that ancient church, do offer the use of St. George's Church to that congregation for celebrating divine worship." The offer was accepted.<sup>1</sup>

Many charges were made against Fletcher, especially respecting large land grants, and he was therefore recalled in 1698. Bellomont, his successor, disapproved of Fletcher's scheme for "settling a ministry." Writing to the Lords of Trade on June 22, 1698, he says:<sup>2</sup>

"The late Governor made advantage to divide the people by supposing a Dutch and English interest to be different here, and therefore, under the notion of a Church of England, to be put in opposition to the Dutch and French

<sup>1</sup> Brodhead's "New York," vol. i., p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 325.



churches established here, he supported a few rascally English who are a scandall to their nation and the Protestant religion, and who joined with him in the worst methods of gaine and severely used the Dutch, except some few Merchants, whose trade he favored, who ought to have an equal benefit of the English Govern<sup>t</sup>, who are most hearty for his present Majty, and are a sober, industrious people, and obedient to Govern<sup>t</sup>."

But Bellomont was also opposed to the charter of the Dutch church. Again writing to the Lords of Trade<sup>1</sup> (November 1, 1698), he says:

"There goes with this a copy of a charter granted by Colonel Fletcher to the Dutch Church here, which I think very extraordinary, for it is setting up a petty jurisdiction to fly in the face of the government, as I have found in my own experience; for being told that Colonel Fletcher had a bribe<sup>2</sup> for passing this charter, I sent to the Church-Masters (so called by the Dutch), which I suppose are equivalent to our Church-Wardens, for a sight of their Church Book, wherein I was told I should find an entry made of the said bribe. The Church-Masters told me they could not consent to my seeing the book till they had spoke to the minister, Mr. Selynus; then I sent them to Mr. Selynus to desire he would let me have a sight of it; to which he returned answer he could not do it, till he had called a Consistory. This behaviour of theirs I confesse provoked me, and I did resolve to have a sight of the booke, tho' I should send a Constable with my warrant to bring it by force; but I thought it best to try fair means, and I sent to speak with Mr. Selynus, and by speaking him fair, I did prevail to see the Church Book, out of which I have copied

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., pp. 427, 463.

<sup>2</sup> Council "Journal" (1703), p. 206, the queen forbids any presents to be given to the governors.



the entry of the said present. The charter goes (No. 8) and the extract out of the Church-Book is (No. 9)."

In April, 1699, the civil and military officers of Queens County presented a petition to the Assembly respecting the support of a dissenting ministry. A favorable report on the petition was made, and a bill was accordingly prepared. An amendment was proposed:<sup>1</sup> "That this Act nor any clause therein contained, shall extend to ye hindrance of ye Dutch and French churches establisht in this Province, nor constrain ye City of New York, ye City of Albany, ye County of Ulster or Kings County to call any other ministers unless at their pleasure." The council suggested its rejection because of the nature of the king's Instructions to Bellomont relating to the settlement of religion. But the council proposed to join with the Assembly in an address to the king to allow an assessment for the support of the Presbyterian and Independent ministers "untill some better order can be in this province had for the settlement of a more orthodox Ministry." In this Bellomont did not quite come up to his former convictions respecting Fletcher's conduct.

Bellomont himself writes on July 22, 1699, to the Lords of Trade on this matter:<sup>2</sup> "The House of Representatives sent up a Bill to me and the Council for settling a Dissenting Ministry in that Province, but it being contrary to his Majesty's instructions, and besides having been credibly informed that some of those ministers do hold strange erroneous opinions in matters of Faith and Doctrine, I would not give the Assent to that Bill, but rejected it."

This was a great disappointment to that people. Bellomont was, however, more liberal than most of the governors. Yet the great discrepancy in numbers between the

<sup>1</sup> Council "Journal," pp. 138, 139.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 536.

non-episcopal churches and the Church of England is seen from the following table of the churches for the year 1700:

PRESBYTERIAN.	
Reformed Dutch .....	29
“ French .....	4
“ German .....	1
Presbyterian .....	9
	— 43
MISCELLANEOUS.	
Independents .....	4
Lutheran .....	2
Episcopalian .....	1
	— 7
	50

The Ministry Act proved to be inefficient for the Church of England, which it never intended to establish. Supplementary acts were passed. In 1703 Cornbury secured an act<sup>1</sup> adding £60 to the £100 mentioned in the Ministry Act, and which had been appropriated to the rector of Trinity Church by its charter. In 1704 another act<sup>2</sup> was passed “granting sundry priviledges and powers to the Rector and Inhabitants of the City of New Yorke of the Communion of the Church of England as by law established.” This was not an amendment to the charter of Trinity Church, but it was intended to facilitate the designs of that charter. Cornbury thus refers to this act:

“The reason for my ascending to the first of these Acts is because the Rector and Vestry of Trinity Church have a charter from Coll. Fletcher, when he was Gov<sup>r</sup> here, and they have been told that charter is defective; so they applied to me for one that might be more sufficient. I told

<sup>1</sup> “Col. Docs.,” vol. iv., p. 1064; vol. vi., p. 2; Council “Journal,” pp. 199, 204, 213.

<sup>2</sup> “Col. Docs.,” vol. iv., pp. 1114, 1115; Council “Journal,” p. 220.

them that I did not perceive by my Commission I have any power to grant Charters of incorporation, and that I would not venture to do it without such a power; some time afterward they came to me again, and desired I would give them leave to offer a Bill to the General Assembly to be passed into an Act for settling the Church; I told them I did consent to it, because by that means the Queen would have the matter fairly before her, and I most humbly intreat Your Lordships favorable representation of that Act to her Majesty that it may be confirmed."

At the opening of the Assembly in 1705 Governor Cornbury said:<sup>1</sup> "The difficulties which some very worthy ministers of the Church of England have met with in getting the maintenance settled upon them by the Act of 1693, moves me to propose to you the passing of an Act Explanatory of the forementioned Act, that those worthy good men, who have ventured to come so far for the service of God in his church, and the good and edification of the people to the salvation of their souls, may not for the future be vexed, as some of them have been, but may enjoy in quiet that maintenance which was by law provided for them." A Supplementary Act<sup>2</sup> was accordingly passed, but it failed to come up to the desires of the governor.

The inoperative character of these acts upon the Dutch may be seen from a statement of Domine Ritzema in 1765. Says he: "Our Netherlandish Church has always been regarded by the Episcopalians as a National Church, and for that reason held in esteem; and the kings have always provided our churches with charters, not only to manage their affairs according to the Netherlandish Constitution established in the Synod of Dort, but also as a body cor-

<sup>1</sup> Council "Journal," pp. 225, 226, 231.

<sup>2</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 1114. "Laws of New York," ch. 146; the preamble says the Ministry Act of 1693 has caused many disputes. See also "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., pp. 1167, 1168; vol. vi., p. 2.



porate, to have and to hold the property belonging thereto, which is denied to all other churches."

Later governors down to the Revolution generally took the same false view of the Ministry Act, namely, that it established the Church of England. The "Journal" of the governor and his council shows that there were frequent attempts made in the Assembly to repeal the Ministry Act because of its perversion. These efforts continued down to 1776.<sup>1</sup> But these bills were either vetoed or smothered by the governor and council. Committees of the Assembly were repeatedly sent to the governor to inquire what had become of these bills. References are too numerous to give.<sup>2</sup>

The feeling of the Dutch portion of the community concerning not only the Ministry Act, but any interference of the governor in their church affairs, is seen in the expression of the people on Long Island.

When in 1705 Bernardus Freeman attempted to take charge of the churches on Long Island by a license from Governor Cornbury, he was stoutly resisted by the people, and his acts declared null and void. In endeavoring to reconcile difficulties which had arisen, they say:

"3<sup>dly</sup>, That all parties do consent, that no such lyeence, or the other orders which the Lord Cornbury has granted to Mr. Freeman whereby the Effects of the said Churches at his pleasure were to be delivered up to Mr. Freeman, never were nor yet are of any force or validity in the Dutch Churches of this Province, but Tended to the ruin of the liberty of the said Churches in this Country; That they do also reject this Position, That all the Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction of the Dutch Churches in this Province is wholly

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. vii., p. 944.

<sup>2</sup> The "Journal" of the Assembly, as well as that of the council (1691-1776), contains much interesting matter on this subject.



in the Power of the Gov<sup>t</sup> according to his will and pleasure, That yet nevertheless all parties do firmly own that the Dutch Churches in this Province are accountable to the Gov<sup>t</sup> for their peaceable and good behaviour in their Doctrin, Disciplin and Church Government; that is to say, as farr as it does consist with the Rules and Constituçons of their own nationall Church alwyes enjoyed at New York, as well as they have the right and Priviledge to be protected by the Civill Gov<sup>t</sup> in the free exercise of their Religion according to their own Constitution."

In the resistance to the collection of the tithe and the many lawsuits which followed, it finally came to be understood that the ecclesiastical statutes of Great Britain had no relation to the colony of New York.<sup>1</sup> Even English dissenters were under no necessity of justifying themselves by the Act of Toleration of 1689, as Rev. Francis McKemie, the first Presbyterian minister in New York City, had done in 1706. It was AMERICA and New York in which they lived, and legally, if the laws were honestly interpreted, there was perfect parity among all Protestant bodies.<sup>2</sup> Hence the Presbyterians at Jamaica, in 1731, recovered by a lawsuit their church property, which had been wrested from them in 1705 by Governor Cornbury.<sup>3</sup> The Ministry Act, emasculated as it was in its passage by the Dutch Assembly, was not so directly detrimental to the Dutch Church as has been generally supposed; nevertheless the patronage of the government and social conditions

<sup>1</sup> Smith's "New York," p. 295, Councilor West's opinion; see also pp. 181, 182. Cornbury's opinion, of course, was of a different kind. "Col. Docs.," vol. iv., p. 1187.

<sup>2</sup> An act was passed in 1700 against Jesuits and Popish priests. "Doc. Hist.," vol. iv., p. 713.

<sup>3</sup> "Doc. Hist. N. Y.," vol. iii., pp. 118-206, contains an elaborate account, though not complete, of the contest about the tithe laws in Queens County, N. Y. See also "Col. Docs.," vol. v., pp. 311-345, 943, 972; vol. vi., pp. 1, 8; vol. vii., p. 497.

led many to unite with the Church of England. On the other hand, the oppressions of Cornbury led many to emigrate to the valleys of the Raritan and Millstone in New Jersey. The milder and more republican form of government in New Jersey was very attractive to the older colonists in both New York and New England; hence that important nucleus of churches in Middlesex, Somerset, and Hunterdon counties, which on account of their spiritual prosperity have long been known as the Garden of the Dutch Church. Here, too, were finally located the college and the theological seminary of the denomination. Partly for the same reasons did Bergen County, in its original extent, and Monmouth County receive considerable increase to their population; although before this Monmouth had received some original Dutch settlers and Bergen had received many employees of the West India Company in reward for services.

The Dutch Church had passed through a great struggle to preserve its existence. After its victory in securing a charter for one of its churches, there was comparative peace. Other Dutch churches secured charters, and this greatly embarrassed the collection of the church-rates for the so-called Established Church. Indeed, the Ministry Act did not serve any Episcopal minister for nine years after its passage.<sup>1</sup> The English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was deceived concerning the true design of the act. Hence they often complained that the clergymen whom they sent over were not supported. But the perverted application of the act necessarily made it inefficient.

At the end of this prolonged struggle against a church establishment of the minority, the thirteen churches of 1664, without immigration, have increased to thirty-four.

<sup>1</sup> "Col. Docs.," vol. v., p. 328.

Twenty-three new ministers have officiated, making thirty-eight in all from the first settlement. Several of them had acquired considerable facility in preaching to the Indians. Twelve were in service in 1705. Like their ancestors in Holland, they throve by persecution and extracted victory from defeat.





PERIOD III.

STRUGGLE FOR ECCLESIASTICAL INDEPENDENCE  
(1707-1792).



## CHAPTER IV.

### REVIVAL, AND BEGINNINGS OF ORGANIZATION— SECESSION AND STRIFE (1707-71).

#### THE GENERATION PRECEDING THE COETUS (1705-47).<sup>1</sup>

THIS was the most quiet and peaceful period in the history of the church at large, although there were some local troubles which we cannot here detail.<sup>2</sup> The privilege of securing charters was a substantial triumph. Opportunity was now allowed for reflection on the past and the devising of plans for the future. The true position of the church began to be understood. Most of the congregations could have services only two or three times a year. The English Society for Propagating the Gospel had begun its labors in 1701. It exerted a good influence among the Indians. Several Dutch ministers were urged to serve under its banner, and a few finally, under peculiar circumstances, consented, but chiefly as missionaries to the Indians.

As early as 1694 Rev. Guiliam Bertholf, who had come to America several years before as catechist, *voorleser*, and schoolmaster, and who had become a leader in the devotions of the people at Hackensack, was sent to Holland for ordination. This was the first example of this custom, if we except the case of Samuel Megapolensis (1658), who

<sup>1</sup> See "Amsterdam Correspondence," Letters 307-464. •

<sup>2</sup> Dispute on Long Island between the parties of Freeman and Antonides: "Doc. Hist.," vol. iii., pp. 89-115; Strong's "Hist. Flatbush." Also opposition to Frelinghuysen, 1726-33.

was sent over privately by his father. In 1709 Rev. Joseph Morgan, having come from the Congregationalists, gave three fourths of his time to the Dutch church in Monmouth County, N. J., and the remainder to a Presbyterian church, he being a member of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. The scarcity of ministers, and the expense, trouble, delay, and danger of procuring them from Holland, drove John van Driessen, with a letter from Patroon Van Rensselaer, to Yale College for ordination (1727); while Mr. Boehme was ordained by the ministers at New York (1729) by special permission of the Classis of Amsterdam. The same necessity compelled the Classis to grant permission (1736) to Domines Haeghoort and Erickzon to ordain John Schuyler to the ministry. But these circumstances, with the necessary discussion excited thereby and the absolute necessity of preachers, paved the way for the preliminary request of the church for semi-ecclesiastical powers and partial independence.

It was also in this period that a spirit of revival began to show itself, about 1730. The "Great Awakening" changed the character of the whole American church.<sup>1</sup> This was a principal reason of the desire for greater facilities to meet the spiritual wants of the people. These necessities led to some justifiable ecclesiastical irregularities. It was also in this period that Rev. Theodore J. Frelinghuysen came to America, in 1720, destined as he was, in himself and in his family, to exert a molding influence upon the history of the Dutch Church. Fighting with formality and the dead orthodoxy which he found prevailing in his locality, caused by a lack of gospel privileges, misunderstood and persecuted by the people, he persevered

<sup>1</sup> See Tracy's history of "The Great Awakening." Rev. Dr. Messler's "Memorial Sermons and Hist. Notes" (1874) gives details of the work on the Raritan.



in preaching the truth until his opponents were converted.<sup>1</sup> Large accessions to the church crowned his labors. Several extensive revivals were the result of his ministry. Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards refer with commendation to his zeal and success. He was also the first pastor of the Reformed Church who began to train up young men for the ministry, and was, perhaps, the first minister in favor of the independence of the church in America. Although he helped to initiate, he did not live to take part in the assemblies of the Coetus; but it was largely owing to his zeal, his foresight, and his persecutions, with their happy results, which finally brought about the entire reorganization of the Dutch Church. He probably first suggested a college for the denomination in which to train up young men for the ministry.

During this period took place, also, a large settlement of Germans.<sup>2</sup> In 1709, under the auspices of Queen Anne, four thousand Palatines, driven out by persecution, embarked for New York. Many settled on the Livingston Manor, in Schoharie County, and in the valley of the Mohawk. Not a few Swiss were among these emigrants. About 1730 the Classis of Amsterdam took charge of them, as well as of the thousands of Germans who settled in Pennsylvania and New Jersey; and this oversight continued until 1793, when the German Reformed Church became ecclesiastically independent. These early Germans in New York State fell into the fold of the Dutch Church. In Hunterdon and neighboring counties in New Jersey, the

<sup>1</sup> His opponents published a complaint ("Klage") in 1725 against him, in a volume of 150 pages. This was translated in 1876 by Rev. M. G. Hansen, and is in the archives of the General Synod. The translation makes 323 pages of manuscript. Peace was not secured until the fall of 1734. See Letters 448, 449.

<sup>2</sup> For details, see "Manual of Ref. Church," 1879, pp. 25, 26, 68-70, and the names of Goetschey, Boehme, Weiss, Dorsius; also Dr. Dubbs's "Hist. of Ref. [Ger.] Ch. in U. S.," in this volume.

Germans and the Dutch touched each other. As early as 1705 Germans from Pennsylvania settled in German Valley, and soon after Lebanon and Amwell were settled by them. Frelinghuysen in New Jersey and Dorsius in Pennsylvania were intimate friends, and correspondence and visitations were not altogether wanting between the Dutch and German ministers of New York and Philadelphia.

We can only mention the names of Cornelius van Santvoord and Bernardus Freeman, ministers who adorned this period, as well as that of the excellent Gualterus du Bois, with his ministry of fifty-two years in New York City (1699-1751). His influence was ever exerted to conciliate and heal. He was so universally honored that, by virtue of accorded merit, he was, says the historian Smith, more like a bishop among the Dutch churches than the pastor of a single congregation.

During the generation preceding the request for a Coetus, the church, considering its circumstances, made remarkable progress. No less than thirty-six new congregations (1701-37) were organized, making now sixty-five in all. Twenty-seven new ministers also began their labors during this period, of whom nineteen were in service at its close.

#### THE REQUEST FOR A COETUS, AND THE DELAY (1737-47).<sup>1</sup>

The reflection and quiet growth of the church during the preceding period, and the necessity of more ministers than could be obtained from Europe, pressed the subject of association and American ordination upon the attention of all. There were more than three times as many churches as pastors. Of the sixty ministers who had labored in the

<sup>1</sup> See "Amst. Cor.," Letters 464-596.

church up to this time, all but seven had come directly from Europe. Three quarters of a century had passed since the English conquest, and the tie which bound the people to Holland was becoming weakened. Only a few octogenarians remained who had seen the fatherland. The people were American. The church in general began to feel that they must take their business more entirely into their own hands, and ordain young men for the ministry.

But at some previous time, the date of which has not been ascertained, a decree of the Synod of North Holland committed the American churches, no longer under the care of the West India Company, to the care of the Classis of Amsterdam. This subordination was very generally acquiesced in. And while the fathers of a century ago almost universally assert the jealous prerogative of the Classis, yet at times, owing, perhaps, to the presence of more liberal-minded men, a better sentiment prevailed; for, when certain ministers were sent to serve the German people who had settled on the Hudson River, at the Camp (1710), they had an order in their commissions (*in mandatis*) to hold a Classis there, although we have discovered no record of their obedience. But it was the Classis of Amsterdam which stimulated Domines Haeghoort and Peter van Driessen (1736) to propose a Coetus.<sup>1</sup> These brethren accordingly wrote to the Consistory of New York (March 15, 1737) "a statement of reasons for the necessity of a Coetus," or Association. The matter was carefully discussed in that Consistory, and resulted finally in a circular call to all the ministers and churches, inviting them to meet in New York (September 5, 1737) for the consideration of this matter. Besides Haeghoort's statement of reasons which accompanied these letters, Domine Du Bois,

<sup>1</sup> In letter of the Classis of January 11, 1735 (No. 450), to the ministers of New York, the Classis already suggest the propriety of an Association.



who wrote the circular, referred to the nature of the proposed body, the need of it to give information abroad and to settle disputes at home. At the time appointed seven ministers—viz., Du Bois, Haeghoort, Freeman, Van Santvoord, Curtenius, Muzelius, and Mancius—met together and drew up a plan for the proposed Association. Mancius and Muzelius argued that they were bound, not only personally, but *mutually*, for the general edification of the church; that the Classical *Acta* say that the provincial ministers are to exercise not only the pastoral office, but ecclesiastical government in every respect; that all the congregations except two were in favor of the plan; that they intended to seek the approbation of the Classis, having already the approbation of individual members of it; that Van Driessen and Haeghoort had been encouraged by the Classis to bring about such organization; and the commission of the ministers to the Camp had actually directed them to hold a Classis. A provisional plan was adopted which need not be here detailed, and another circular was sent out by Domine Du Bois arguing their right to seek association; that it was needed to heal divisions and doctrinal errors, to give effective counsels, to promote unity, and to attract ministers to America.

The following spring (April, 1738) the same ministers, with the exception of Muzelius and Mancius, together with Frelinghuysen, Erickzon, Boehme, and Schuyler, and eleven elders, met in New York and received the answers of the churches, and after amending their plan sent it to Holland for approval. A speedy and happy consummation was surely expected.

But now the Classis did seem jealous of their prerogatives, for they wrote the following year (1739) to some disaffected parties that they would allow a Coetus "under the express condition that care was taken not to have a



word uttered against the doctrine, and to have no preparatory or final examinations for candidates or ministers; these being matters which were, by the Synod of Dort, restricted to the respective Classes, and which, therefore, were reserved by us in forming a Coetus some years since in the colony of Surinam."

Subsequently the Classis sought to effect a union of the Dutch with the Presbyterian and the German churches, but without success. Nine years elapsed before they granted a favorable reply. The Presbyterians had been fully organized for more than a generation, and Dorsius was preparing students for the ministry of the German churches in Pennsylvania. In the same year that the request for a Coetus was sent to Holland, Dorsius and Frelinghuysen ordained Goetschius on their individual responsibility. At length the Classis was morally compelled to grant a Coetus to the German churches (1747), after which they could no longer withhold it from the Dutch. The organization of the College of New Jersey during the preceding year (1746) may also have stimulated them.

Although Frelinghuysen had acted irregularly in ordaining Goetschius, he soon after sent his sons, Theodore and John, to Holland for education and ordination. During this interim of delay eight new ministers began their labors: five had come from Holland; two American youths had returned from Holland, whither they had gone for ordination, viz., Fryenmoet and Theodore Frelinghuysen, afterward of Albany; and Goetschius had been privately ordained here. Twenty-three ministers remained in the country. Two new churches had been organized. Among the newcomers from Holland was Domine John Ritzema (1744), who was destined to play so important a part in the future destinies of the church.

THE COETUS (1747-54)—THE BEGINNING OF INDEPENDENCE—ASSOCIATION OF THE SCATTERED MINISTERS AND CHURCHES IN ORDER TO INCREASE THEIR USEFULNESS AND MEET THE SPIRITUAL NECESSITIES OF THE PEOPLE.

The plan of the Coetus, as finally adopted by the delegates in this country and ratified in Holland, provided for delegates, both ministers and elders, from every church; the transaction of only ecclesiastical business, while acknowledging subordination to the Classis of Amsterdam; yet, for the greater advantage of the congregations, *Circles* were to be established, to which the questions of congregations were first to be taken, and ultimately, if necessary,\* to the Coetus. It was also stipulated that all ministers hereafter arriving should belong to the Coetus.

But within a year after the formation of this body (1748) they were exhorted by the Classis not to ask permission to examine and ordain students. But three had applied at their first session, viz., Vanderlinde, John Leydt, and Verbryck. The Coetus had previously gained permission to examine and ordain the first two of these; but in behalf of Verbryck they fairly had to plead for permission, which was at length reluctantly granted. Frelinghuysen, of Albany, was at first opposed to American ordination, but finally became its most zealous advocate. The body was obliged to send one young man away because of the reluctance of the Classis, and others were prevented, therefore, from applying. Their inability to do anything decisive in the troubles of Arondeus, on Long Island, and of Muzelius, at Tappan, made them feel their subordination and their helplessness most keenly. Some also refused to recognize the shadow of authority which they thought they possessed. Their only privilege seemed to be to send a

joint letter once a year to Holland. Their desire to assist the church more conveniently and rapidly to a ministry adequate to its necessities was completely balked. Two young men whom they had sent to Holland for ordination had thereby lost their lives—viz., Ferdinand and Jacobus Frelinghuysen—having died of smallpox at sea.

The friends of the church, therefore, soon became convinced of the necessity of having a more efficient judicatory. This growing feeling induced them to propose a Classis (1753). It gave rise, naturally, to considerable discussion, and Haeghoort at first protested against the change. A year later, some amendments having been made, a draft of the general features of the proposed Classis was adopted (September 19, 1754), *nemine contradicente*, by eleven ministers and eleven elders. De Ronde was not present; but Ritzema, Haeghoort, Curtenius, and Vanderlinde, all of whom a year later had seceded, were present, and appeared to be in favor of it. The draft states that they were "constrained in conscience to seek to become changed into a Classis, in view of the defective, fruitless, and disagreeable nature of the present organization." It further stated that "the Coetus could give no satisfactory reason from the Church Order for its present constitution," being neither a Consistory, a Classis, nor a Synod; that it could give no decisive judgment; it could not ordain to the ministry; that the delay of sending all matters to Holland was very great; that the expense and danger of sending young men across the ocean was likewise great; that candidates would seek ordination from other bodies, an example of which had already occurred; that as a Classis they would be in a condition to attend to all matters promptly, as they arose; that they could furnish congregations with ministers; and therefore they requested the aid of the Classis of Amsterdam, and



of the Synod of North Holland, to reach the desired consummation.

The plan was sent to the churches for their action upon it. The answers were to be sent to Ritzema, Schuyler, and Verbryck, as a committee, who were to send the draft and the answers of the churches to the Classis and Synod in Holland. Little did they imagine the events which were speedily to follow.

During the period of the Coetus proper (1748-54) fifteen ministers were added to the Reformed Church, but only four of these by authority of that body. Six students had passed by them and gone to Holland for ordination, and five Europeans had emigrated to America. Four new churches had been organized, and twenty-nine ministers were in service.

#### THE DISRUPTION OF THE CHURCH (1754).

There was at this time a general desire to improve the educational facilities in New York. But the heterogeneity of the population, and fear of an English church establishment, constituted great difficulties in the way. Harvard and Yale existed in New England, the College of Nassau (Princeton) in New Jersey, and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Moneys had been raised by the New York Assembly by lottery, as early as 1746, for a college. In 1751 the amount had reached £3443. Trustees were appointed to take charge of these funds, seven of whom were Episcopalian, two Dutch Reformed, and one Presbyterian. The latter was that eminent jurist, William Livingston, but he never qualified as trustee. In 1752 he started a small weekly paper called the "Independent Reflector," in which he thoroughly reviewed the plans proposed for establishing a college in New York. He in-



sisted that it should be by charter and not by act of the Assembly, and that it should be unsectarian. It was to be supported by general taxation, and nine tenths of the population, Mr. Livingston declares, were non-episcopal. His articles are very trenchant. Answers were attempted in the columns of the New York "Mercury." In a year and a half Mr. Livingston's paper was suppressed by exciting fears in the printer.

In May, 1754, Trinity Church came to the rescue of the languishing scheme by offering<sup>1</sup> part of the "king's farm" as land for a college. This land was a block west of the City Hall Park, between West Broadway and Church Street. It was given on condition that the president should always be an Episcopalian, and that the Book of Common Prayer should be used. The trustees now again petitioned the governor to incorporate the institution. So strong was their expectation of success that college exercises were begun in the vestry-room of Trinity Church with seven pupils, in June, 1754. Mr. Livingston now protested against the incorporation with "Twenty Unanswerable Reasons." Petitions were also sent in by the people<sup>2</sup> against the scheme, until the Assembly should have settled its mode of government. But the two Dutch trustees had already deserted Livingston and sided with the Episcopalians. The trustees published "A Brief Vindication of their Proceedings relating to the College, containing a Sufficient Answer to the late Famous Protest, with its Twenty Unanswerable Reasons."

Now it was just at this juncture that five members of the Coetus—viz., Haeghoort, Curtenius, Ritzema, De Ronde, and Vanderlinde—seceded from that body. They

<sup>1</sup> These offers printed in "Centennial of New Brunswick Seminary," p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> These petitions and protests all given in "Centennial of New Brunswick Seminary," pp. 309-319.

seem to have become suddenly enamored with the project of the college as proposed. Were they deceived by specious promises?

The last meeting of the Coetus before the disruption took place on September 19, 1754. The proposition for a Classis, with a plan of the same, was sent down to the churches for their determination. Most of the churches were favorable to the proposition. The church of New York, however, opposed it. They took formal action on October 1, 1754. They said that if a Coetus was of no advantage a Classis would be of still less; they released Domine De Ronde from the stipulations of his call to support the Coetus; they appointed a committee, consisting of Domines Ritzema and De Ronde, to write to the Classis of Amsterdam and oppose the creation of a Classis. And finally:

"5. It was resolved to present a petition to the Assembly, requesting liberty to have a Professor of Divinity in the Low Dutch Church, who shall, according to the institution of the same, instruct therein freely and without hindrance. Domines Ritzema and De Ronde, and Elders Cuyler and Richard, were made a committee to prepare the draft."

PETITION OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF NEW YORK  
CITY TO THE ASSEMBLY FOR A PROFESSORSHIP  
OF DIVINITY IN KING'S COLLEGE (1754).<sup>1</sup>

"A petition of the Ministers, Elders and Deacons of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, in the city of New York, was presented to the House and read, setting forth that as the establishing of a College within this Colony for

<sup>1</sup> From the "Journal" of the Assembly (of the province), vol. ii., p. 392, October 25, 1754.

the instruction of youth in the liberal arts and sciences has given rise to various debates, and is of the utmost importance to their civil, and more especially their religious, liberties; they conceive it highly necessary, as guardians of the ecclesiastical interests of the Dutch congregations of this city in particular, and the other Dutch churches in this province in general, [that they] should . . . endeavor to add to the privileges and liberties they have heretofore enjoyed under the auspicious smiles of the British Government; that a College for the instruction of youth in sound literature will be very advantageous in general; but unless provision be made for a Professor of Divinity for the benefit of the Dutch churches in this country, they will lose a main advantage thereby (and which they prefer to every other benefit expected from a public Seminary of learning), as the youth intended for the ministry will without that privilege, at a vast expense to the parents, be obliged to reside several years in Holland, or other foreign Protestant countries; that the institution of such a Professor would make the intended College more numerous and flourishing, as their youths would thereby be encouraged to the study of Divinity; that as the Dutch are the greatest number of any single denomination of Christians in this Province, it may reasonably be expected that in all Provincial contributions they will be the greatest benefactors to the intended College; and, therefore, humbly praying that the Honorable House will be favorably pleased, whenever the matter of the said College comes under consideration, they may, by the Act for incorporating and establishing the same, be entitled to a Divinity Professor, with a reasonable salary, to be nominated by the Ministers, Elders and Deacons of the Dutch Reformed Protestant Church in this City; and that the said Professor may freely and without control teach the doctrines of faith



maintained by their churches, as established and approved of by the National Synod of Dort, 1618, 1619."

"Ordered, that the said petition be taken into consideration when the House proceeds on the consideration of establishing a College for the education of youth within this Colony."

Mr. Livingston writes to Rev. Noah Welles (October 18, 1754) upon this subject, as follows: "The Dutch Church has preferred a petition to the Assembly (now sitting), praying for a Professor of Divinity in the college, to be chosen and appointed by them; which petition, for the reasons set forth in the same, I doubt not will be granted, and will not fail of having a good effect, even should it be rejected. If it meets with success, it will secure to the Dutch a Calvinistic professor, and diminish that badge of distinction to which the Episcopalians are so zealously aspiring. Should it be rejected, as it will meet with opposition from the sticklers for a party college, that will animate the Dutch against them, and convince them that all their pretenses to sisterhood and identity were fallacious and hypocritical."

This petition was favorably received by the Assembly, and the New York church confidently expected the full accomplishment of their desires; but while this matter was pending they wrote<sup>1</sup> to the Classis of Amsterdam (October 17, 1754), expatiating upon the uselessness of the Coetus, the importance of a learned ministry, that American-made ministers would bring about a total separation of the church from Holland, that partisanship ruled the Coetus, and "for these and the like reasons we are bold to renew our old relations and remain in entire correspondence with you, to

<sup>1</sup> See the entire letter in "Centennial of New Brunswick Seminary," p. 302.



communicate our affairs, and expect counsel and direction; and we hope that you will in no respect withdraw from us, but continue to be our counselors for the good of our church, and we desire that the undertaking of the petitioners [i.e., the expected request of the Coetus for a Classis] may not prosper." This was signed by the whole Consistory.

We cannot but wonder that this letter does not mention their petition to the Assembly for a professorship in King's College. One week later (October 31, 1754) the governor, although not without reluctance, granted a charter for King's (now Columbia) College, without including the divinity professorship for the Dutch. On the same day William Livingston published the first of fifty-two articles called "The Watch-Tower" in the New York "Mercury," to whose columns he had now gained access. His articles enlightened the public mind. He proposed a bill for an unsectarian college in November, 1755. This was not afterward pressed to a passage, but it had its effect on the public.

The governors of the college named in the charter were to be certain civil functionaries, *ex officio*, and twenty-four other gentlemen (of whom Mr. Livingston was one), the rector of Trinity Church, the senior minister of the Dutch church, the ministers of the ancient Lutheran church, of the French church, and of the Presbyterian *congregation* in the city of New York. Mr. Livingston never qualified as a trustee by taking the required oath, but Domine Ritzema did. In the last number of "The Watch-Tower" Livingston addressed the newly arrived governor, Hardy (November 17, 1775), reviewing the whole history of the charter, holding up the real objects of the respective parties, claiming that, notwithstanding the charter, he had gained the people. This fact appeared from the difficulties which now arose about the transfer of the funds from the original

temporary trustees to the governors named in the charter. Were they not the people's funds, and not those of a single and small religious body? After a year of debate one half of them was diverted to the corporation of the city, wherewith to build a new jail and pest-house. The college, also, founded on a basis contrary to the general wishes of the majority, never thrived until after the Revolution. Livingston's opinion of his victory is expressed in the following note to De Ronde at this time:

"*Amicus noster invictusque pro republica pugnator, 'The Watch-Tower,' in ipso ætatis ac victoriarum flore, septimane superiore diem clausit extremum. Nec alienis hostilibusque viribus interfectus est, sed lubens et more triumphantium, memorque patriæ atque pristinæ dignitatis suæ, pugnans victorque a prælio decessit. Hanc ob causam plus nobis olim est otii.*"

Although the scheme of a professor for the Dutch in King's College had thus far failed, the church at large was greatly displeased at the attempt. Rev. Theodore Frelinghuysen, pastor at Albany, started on January 1, 1755, visiting all the principal churches, and securing signatures for a college for the Dutch alone. He also ascertained the opinion in reference to the American Classis.

Meanwhile, as the time drew near when the committee should have been convoked (April 1-10, 1755) to hear the reports of the churches in the matter of the Classis, Ritzema and his friends must have painfully felt the awkwardness of their situation. While he had abandoned the Coetus, his Episcopal friends had not stood by him. The subject had been thoroughly ventilated during the winter, and the friends of the college, while they saw they had acted unhandsomely, were likewise somewhat alarmed. If Frelinghuysen's academy succeeded they would have a poor support for their college, as the Dutch population was

yet largely in the majority. Shall not they and the Dutch friends in New York again strike hands, which would both relieve the charter of its partisan character and relieve certain Dutch ministers from their predicament? It would be mutually advantageous. Yet, owing to the strong popular feeling against the college, would it be wise to carry the subject before the public? Mr. Ritzema, as one of the qualified governors of the college, had peculiar opportunities to try again to secure the professorship in the college.

Accordingly we read: "At the first meeting of the Board of Governors (May 7, 1755), after their acceptance of the charter, and the speech of the lieutenant-governor, and the reply of Mr. Chambers, Rev. Mr. Ritzema, senior minister of the Dutch church, among other things addressed by him to the lieutenant-governor, remarked that he was sorry to have observed the differences and animosities in the province touching several restrictions in the charter. He expressed his hope that some means might be fallen upon to heal them, and his belief that it would conduce greatly to that end if his Honor would be pleased to grant, either by addition to the charter or in such other manner as should be thought most proper, that there should be established in the college a professor of divinity, for the education of such of the youth of their church as might be intended for the ministry, with a suitable allowance of salary, and to be chosen by the Consistory of that church for the time being. The lieutenant-governor, in reply, expressed his approval of Mr. Ritzema's suggestion, and his willingness to grant any application in accordance with it that the governors might address to him. The governors at once *unanimously* adopted Mr. Ritzema's proposal, and appointed a committee to prepare their petition accordingly; which being reported at their next meeting, and approved, the same committee was directed to present



it, and at the meeting after, on the 3d of June, Mr. Banyar, deputy secretary of the province, delivered to the governors his Majesty's additional charter, making provision for the establishment of a professor in divinity, according to the doctrine, discipline, and worship established by the national Synod of Dort." The success of this second attempt, with the preceding circumstances in general, was the immediate cause of the disruption of the Dutch Church.

#### THE ACTION OF THE COETUS—THEIR ASSUMPTION OF INDEPENDENCE.

The committee not having met in the early part of April, and Ritzema having finally succeeded in his plans in the early part of May (1755), the Rev. Theodore Frelinghuysen assumed the responsibility of calling an extra meeting of the Coetus for May 30th. Its design was to take official action in the matter of an American Classis, and also to consider the subject of an academy distinctively for the Dutch Church. Ritzema, of course, was not present, although the meeting was held in New York. Three years later he sought to vindicate the conduct of himself and his friends by saying that they "were driven off by the imperious conduct of Rev. Theodore Frelinghuysen, who took it upon himself, without the order of any one, to put the congregations under a Classis, and to erect an academy the professors of which he had already named, and the support of which he intended to draw from Holland." Ritzema, as the last president of the Coetus, held the Book of Minutes, which the Coetus party never recovered. Thenceforth the anti-Coetus men, as if they were the representatives of the church, although a minority, recorded their own letters, and subsequently (1764), when they found it expedient to organize themselves formally, they recorded their proceedings, in this same volume. But it was several years before they could obtain any official recognition from



Holland. We have, therefore, the subsequent proceedings of the Coetus (or American Classis, which it now became) only in fragments. If they were recorded in a volume it is not impossible that it may yet come to light. Part of their proceedings at this extra meeting was the commissioning of Mr. Frelinghuysen to go to Holland to collect funds for the proposed academy. This document was written in the Latin language, and signed by the ministerial members present. A copy was made in the Dutch language, somewhat more expanded, and this contains the names of the elders:

“OUR SALUTATION IN THE LORD TO ALL WHO MAY READ  
THIS LETTER.<sup>1</sup>

“[May, 1755.] Inasmuch as it is expedient for the glory of God, and conducive to the salvation of men, to establish in these recently inhabited ends of the earth seminaries of true philosophy as well as of sound doctrine, that men may be imbued with the principles of human wisdom, virtue, and unostentatious piety: Therefore we, pastors and elders of the Reformed Church of both provinces—viz., of New York and New Jersey, in North America—being assembled in a Coetus, and having established an alliance among ourselves, do resolve in these present critical times to strive with all our energy, and in the fear of God, to plant a university or seminary for young men destined for study in the learned languages and in the liberal arts, and who are to be instructed in the philosophical sciences; also that it may be a school of the prophets in which young Levites and Nazarites of God may be prepared to enter upon the sacred ministerial office in the church of God. Indeed, because our country is yet new, and not possessed of so great wealth as is required for the

<sup>1</sup> “Amst. Cor.,” Doc. 794. See the original Latin in “Manual of 1869,”

work prescribed, *therefore* we earnestly beseech all the well disposed, and implore them to be willing to help us with the power of money, by giving something for the promotion of this great and peculiarly necessary work which we have undertaken; and we hereby delegate and do appoint, by our authority and this present instrument, the Rev. Domine Theodore Frelinghuysen, the very faithful pastor of the Reformed church at Albany, to present our most humble petition wherever the providence of God may open up a way, and to explain more fully the weighty reasons of this our proposition; to receive donations, and in all circumstances to act as may seem good to him and necessary for the furtherance of the matter above mentioned. He will also give, in behalf of the brethren united in this alliance, an exact account of all things. We therefore pray that the all-sufficient God will give him a pleasant voyage across the ocean and a prosperous return, and will open the hearts and the hands of the well disposed, and bountifully reward them for their gifts contributed to us, both in this world and in the world to come.

“Done in our Coetus Convention, held in New York on the thirtieth day of May, 1755. In the name and by the authority of the whole Coetus.

“REINHART ERICKZON, *p. t. President*,  
JOHANNES LEYDT, *p. t. Scribe*,  
BENJAMIN MEYNEMA,  
ULPIANDIS VAN SINDERIN,  
JOHANNES HENRICUS GOETSCHUIS,  
J. C. FRYENMOET,  
SAMUEL VERBRYCK,  
DAVID MARINUS,  
BARENT VROOMAN,  
JOHANNES SCHUNEMAN,  
THOMAS ROMEYN.”

The Coetus had great hopes of success in this matter, on account of the peculiar success of Mr. Schlatter in 1751, when he visited Europe in behalf of the German churches. But the circumstances were not altogether similar. Mr. Frelinghuysen did not start on his mission until four and a half years later (October, 1759).

At this same meeting, without waiting further, all the powers of a Classis were assumed, according to the constitution of the church (May 30, 1755).<sup>1</sup> Correspondence had been had with Holland during the previous winter, but with not very satisfactory results. It seemed necessary to take this independent course in order to forestall the plans of the professorship in King's College, which had been consummated without authority from Holland, and, after its first failure, without authority from the church of New York. The Coetus at once proceeded to license Henry Frelinghuysen, whose case had been pending for some time; and from year to year they licensed others without consulting the wishes of the European Classis. They also at this first meeting censured the opponents of Domine Goetschius at Hackensack, as well as his colleague, Curtenius, and Domine Haeghoort, who defended him. These parties, in turn, commenced a civil suit against them as disturbers of the peace. When afterward directed to remove these censures by the Classis of Amsterdam, they refused to obey. Subsequently, when Schuyler succeeded Curtenius at Hackensack, they censured him for doing this without their permission.

When Domine Ritzema's amendment to the charter of the college became known to the public, there was much dissatisfaction with it, even in his own church. His Consistory entered a complaint (August 11, 1755) against his

<sup>1</sup> See Smith's "New York," p. 334.



course of conduct in this respect, and ordered it to be entered on their records.<sup>1</sup>

COMPLAINT OF THE CHURCH OF NEW YORK AGAINST  
RITZEMA.

At a meeting of the Consistory of New York one of the members presented a writing, with a request that it should be read to the meeting; which having been done, it was by a majority vote ordered to be recorded in the church book, and for this purpose given to the president. It runs thus:

“A testimony and declaration in writing of the elders, deacons, and church-masters of the Low Dutch Reformed Protestant Congregation in the city of New York.

“After that the Consistory, in the year 1754, had presented a request to the Hon. House of Assembly, in their own name and that of the other Low Dutch congregations in the province of New York, asking certain rights or privileges in the provincial academy or college which they were about to establish among us, and had obtained a favorable reply thereto, it was thought proper to leave the matter to their Honors’ prudence and wisdom, not doubting that they, with the consent of the lieutenant-governor and the high council, would lay the foundation and the principles of the said academy in such a way that the Low Dutch Reformed congregations here, as well as others, would acquiesce therein with joy and satisfaction, and be animated to do their utmost for its upbuilding and advancement, with unity and brotherly love, binding hearts and hands together with all who sought to further the welfare and success of the same;

“And seeing that since that time some persons have

<sup>1</sup> Although this amendment to the charter was passed, it was never put on the public records.



obtained a charter for a college for the English Church, whose fundamental articles are opposed to the object of the provincial academy, and which is so strictly limited that almost no privileges or liberties are left to induce other denominations to unite with them, but only a small number of trustees or governors of the college who are not of that church, who can easily be overborne in voting by those of the English Church, which has given much offense and dissatisfaction here, especially to those who have at heart their rights and privileges;

“This being so, notwithstanding Domine John Ritzema, as the oldest minister of our congregation at New York, allowed himself to qualify as one of the governors of the said college, and took an oath to seek the prosperity of the same, all without the knowledge, advice, or consent of the Consistory—nay, against their will and purpose—and used all diligence to establish said college, together with a pressure to obtain an addition to the charter, providing a Dutch professor for the Low Dutch people; which addition, when obtained, is of no essential advantage, being so limited that the said governors, or the majority of fifteen of them, may, according to their pleasure, under pretense of misconduct, suspend the Dutch professor, or even displace him from his office, without any liberty of appeal; and, under the appearance of liberties allowed to the Low Dutch Church, they seek to move the members of the Hon. House of Assembly, by a request or petition, to bestow the public money on the said English Church college, which request, or petition, was signed by Domine Ritzema, as one of the governors, and thereby he instigated the Assembly to confirm and ratify the said charter;

“And seeing that we, the present ruling Consistory, are by God’s providence chosen over this congregation to watch for its welfare, and as far as possible hinder any dis-

cord or perversity, we cannot with a good conscience omit to have noted in the church book the following testimonies, in order that every one of our congregation, and those who come after us, may know our solemn convictions of the imprudent conduct of Domine John Ritzema, and also because our silence in so weighty a matter might be taken for a consent and approval: Therefore we testify:

“1. That Domine John Ritzema, in allowing himself to be qualified as governor or overseer of said English charter college, did this without our knowledge, and therefore without the advice, counsel, or consent of the Consistory.

“2. That the addition to said charter, which was obtained by means of his reverence, and is said to contain full privileges for our congregation, was prepared incontestably without our knowledge, advice, or counsel, and in no respect answers to our conception of what would be advantageous for the upbuilding of our church, and is dearly bought, since it is so fettered by the jurisdiction of other parties that the liberties and rights therein given to the Low Dutch are nothing but a fair show.

“3. That the aforesaid conduct of his reverence with the gentlemen of the English Church, in a matter of so great importance to our congregation, without the knowledge or counsel of the Consistory, is contrary to our expectation, against the close bonds which ought to exist between Consistory and minister, against the indispensable respect which he ought to show to the Consistory, against brotherly love, and against the unity and peace of our congregation.

“4. That the strife and discord which have arisen upon his course, his reverence alone is the cause and author of.

“Set down, according to the resolution of the Consistory, this eleventh of August, 1755. In the name of all.

“Signed,

“LAMBERTUS DE RONDE, *Pres.*”

To this Domine Ritzema made a feeble reply.<sup>1</sup>

On account of these circumstances a sad division took place in the church, which lasted for sixteen years (1755-71). It is known as the Coetus and Conferentie controversy. The details of the struggle have been given with considerable fullness in the author's "Manual of the Reformed Church in America" (1879), and need not be here repeated. The Conferentie pleaded long for recognition by the Classis of Amsterdam, and it was only partially obtained after several years. This recognition was unfortunate, as they then tried to organize an independent body (1764), which had a brief and sickly existence. Meantime the Coetus or American Classis continued to exercise independent powers, although in constant correspondence with the Classis of Amsterdam. They examined and ordained young men as opportunity permitted. A pamphlet controversy was carried on for several years by Ritzema, of New York, and Rev. John Leydt, of New Brunswick, N. J., in which the whole question of the right to organize independently to meet the spiritual necessities of the people was discussed. Contests and irregular suspensions took place, with appeals to the civil power. It was during this controversy that it was said that the oath of allegiance to Great Britain was inconsistent with subordination to the foreign state church of Holland, and hence they must be independent. Rev. Herman Meyer, a man of a sweet evangelical spirit, was a principal sufferer through irregular disciplinary acts of the Conferentie party. The Classis of Amsterdam vacillated, and threatened to abandon both parties. The whole matter became complicated with the introduction of English preaching in New York in 1763, which resulted in a sad lawsuit. The American Classis in 1766 obtained a charter for Queen's College in New Jer-

<sup>1</sup> See "Manual," 1879, p. 44.

sey. Several ineffectual attempts were made to unite the parties, but the Conferentie were unwilling that the majority should rule. Churches and even families were divided, and religion was disgraced. There seemed no way to effect a reconciliation.



## CHAPTER V.

### REUNION OF THE PARTIES—ECCLESIASTICAL INDEPENDENCE—ADOPTION OF A CONSTITUTION (1771-92).

BUT while no basis of harmony seemed possible to human wisdom, circumstances were occurring which would result in the union of the two parties. As the pious John Livingston, of Ancrum, Scotland, had been driven to Holland a century before, and had found a welcome reception in the Reformed Church of that land, so now Providence ordered it that a descendant of his should repay the former kindness by becoming a peacemaker to the Reformed Dutch Church in America.

John H. Livingston was graduated from Yale College in 1762. After some hesitation as to his future course, he dedicated himself to the ministry. The question now pressed itself upon his attention whether he should remain in the Dutch Church or join the Presbyterian or the Episcopal. The condition of the Dutch Church was very uninviting just then; not only on account of the division, but on account of the difficulties connected with the change of language. He did not understand Dutch very well; and, to be useful to all, he would probably be obliged to go to Holland for his theological education and ordination. Nevertheless he decided to remain in the church of his

fathers. The very troubles which would have repelled most men led him to devote himself to the task of reconciling the parties. And he was not mistaken in his mission.

In the summer of 1765 he became acquainted with the devoted Laidlie, and learned all the circumstances of the state of the church. At length he sailed for Holland (May 12, 1766), being the last of the American youth who went thither for education and ordination. It was a fortunate circumstance for the party of independence that they had successively three such able men to represent them in the fatherland in the decade preceding their success. Theodore Frelinghuysen (1760) had urged the necessity of a university for the church, and of an American Classis; Hardenbergh, an able American ordained minister (1761-63), had exerted a happy influence in enlightening public opinion in reference to the wants of the American churches; and now (1766-70) Livingston was eminently calculated to complete the work. He attended lectures at the University of Utrecht, and by his lovely spirit made many friends. He mastered the Dutch language, and learned to speak in Latin almost as readily as in his native tongue. He developed in piety as in knowledge, and became a winner of souls while abroad.

But his heart was ever seeking to devise plans of peace for the churches in America. He was in constant correspondence with friends at home, especially with an eminent elder, Abram Lott, who had also been treasurer of the province of New York. When the Coetus party obtained their charter for a college in New Jersey (November, 1766), he labored diligently to make that plan effective. He secured from liberal friends the promise that they would educate a proper American youth as professor in said institution (1767). He afterward abandoned the plan, lest it should seem to have too partisan a character.

After the visit of Dr. Witherspoon to Holland (1768) a Plan of Union was drawn up similar to that which was afterward adopted, except that the American Dutch youth studying for the ministry should be educated at Princeton. It was thought that the Dutch Church could hardly sustain an independent theological professor, and the professors in Holland had confidence in Dr. Witherspoon. This plan was laid before the Synod of North Holland and provisionally approved. In the meantime the Classis of Amsterdam wrote to the American churches concerning the matter. But the Coetus objected to a local union with Princeton, even as they had formerly objected to a professorship in King's College. The Conferentie, with the exception of Rysdyck, were utterly opposed to the plan, and gave a negative answer without even consulting their elders. The Coetus, however, sent a circular letter to the churches to ascertain their general opinion. A committee of the Coetus waited upon the New York Consistory (May 4, 1769), representing "their heartfelt inclination for peace, and requested that the Consistory would be pleased to act according to their ability to promote that desirable end." The Consistory answered that they also had "a heartfelt desire for peace; but since this project relates peculiarly to them [the Coetus] they should state how they regard it: whether they approve it, and, if not, if they have any observations to make thereupon, and, if so, what." It does not appear what reply, if any, the Coetus made.

An effort was now made by the friends of Ritzema (1769) to put him in the theological chair in King's College; and the Classis of Amsterdam was pleased with the plan, and recommended its adoption, until a college for the Dutch could be erected. But in the state of feeling which existed it was impossible for such a plan to succeed.

This circumstance apparently stimulated the Coetus



party to still greater efforts. Their chartered academy of 1766 had deservedly failed, because it was too narrow and limited in its design. It was to be distinctively Dutch. They now cut loose from such narrowness of spirit, and launched forth upon a more liberal course. They obtained a charter for Queen's (now Rutgers) College upon a foundation capable of almost indefinite expansion (March 20, 1770).<sup>1</sup> Its preamble states that the people of the Reformed faith and discipline were very numerous, and were desirous of a learned and well-qualified ministry, and therefore desired a college not only for the usual reasons, but especially that young men might prepare for the ministry; that the inconveniences were many and the expenses heavy in procuring ministers from Europe, or sending young men thither for education; that there was a great necessity for an increased number of ministers, and that a charter was necessary for the preservation of collegiate funds.

The charter states that the proposed institution was designed "to promote learning for the benefit of the community, and the advancement of the Protestant religion *of all denominations*; and more especially to remove, as much as possible, the necessity our said loving subjects have hitherto been under of sending their youth intended for the ministry *to a foreign country for education, and of being subordinate to a foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction.*"

The trustees were directed to meet first at Hackensack, in May, 1770. The location of the college was not determined by the charter. The president was always to be a member of the Reformed Dutch Church, and could be the professor of divinity also, if elected thereto. And while the trustees were to appoint such professors or tutors as

<sup>1</sup> "Amst. Cor.," Doc. 1093. It is printed in several pamphlets relating to the college, and in "Minutes of General Synod," vol. viii., 1850, with supplementary acts, 1799, 1825.



they thought necessary, they were always to have one professor or teacher *well versed in the English language!*

The location of this college created no little discussion. The body of the church was on the banks of the Hudson River; but should not the college be located at a point as accessible as possible to the German churches in Pennsylvania? Two German ministers—viz., Revs. Philip Wyberg and Jonathan du Bois—had been named in the charter as trustees. The location was finally determined for New Brunswick in preference to Hackensack, as the region of the Raritan subscribed most liberally for its endowment. But the charter was obtained by a party, and it could not at once succeed. If, instead of the “expensive and repressive educational routine” of the Conferentie, which had paralyzed all extension and left vacant about two thirds of the pulpits of the church, the plans of the Coetus had been earlier adopted, how much better it would have been for the denomination! And if the claims of this college had been more quickly recognized, how much more rapid would have been its progress! As in every good cause, however, patience was still needed, and the ways of Providence would ultimately vindicate themselves.

With the completion of the Fulton Street Church, and the necessity of another English preacher, the New York Consistory determined to call Dr. Livingston (May 30, 1769) to become the colleague of Laidlie, Ritzema, and De Ronde. He arrived in New York on September 3, 1770. His piety was of the highest character; his education abroad placed him above reproach; while his learning commanded the respect of all. The neutral position of his church gave him peculiar advantages. His reputation soon gained for him an extensive acquaintance with the ministers of both parties. The church was weary and ashamed of strife, and was praying for peace. He had

obtained from the Synod of North Holland the reference of this whole subject of union to the Classis of Amsterdam, with power. This simplified matters. He brought over a plan provisionally indorsed by the Classis, similar to the former plan, but omitting any proposition to unite with Princeton or King's College. This plan was discussed privately and by correspondence for a year. At length, when all things seemed to be ready, he proposed to his Consistory to invite a general convention of the churches to consider plans of union. This was heartily agreed to. The following is the invitation:<sup>1</sup>

“REVEREND: The mournful circumstances of the Low Dutch Reformed churches in this land are too well known to all to render it necessary to relate the same to you, who are so well acquainted with the discords existing, and are so ready to heal the breach of Joseph. We hope that the long-delayed desire, which has made so many hearts sick, is now at last come to pass. May it be as a tree of life! We know that letters have come from the brethren of the Rev. Classis of Amsterdam to the Conferentie, and also to those of the Coetus; and they have likewise written to us, approving our efforts to join the hands of the brethren and, if possible, promote the happiness and prosperity of the church. We are greatly inclined to this, and think that a general meeting should be held this autumn. We leave it to your better judgment, and desire not to dictate; but since it necessarily comes before us, and we are conscious that your inclination is for union, we offer our services to help in any way for the attainment of that great end. Since this city is the most suitable place for meeting, and the middle of October the best time, in view of

<sup>1</sup> “Amst. Cor.,” Letter 1107.

the season of the year, we fraternally request you, each with an elder, to come to New York on the third Tuesday of October next, being the 15th of the month, in order then, if it please the Lord, to establish a firm and enduring church constitution. With invocation of all health and blessing upon your persons and the congregations committed to you, we have the honor to remain, Rev. and Honored Brethren,

“Your affect. Servants and Brethren in the Lord,

“J. H. LIVINGSTON, *Prest. p. t.*

“N. Y., in our Consistory meeting, Sept. 4, 1771.”

#### THE UNION CONVENTION (1771).

The wished-for day (October 15, 1771) at length arrived. Everything was propitious. Dr. Livingston had been appointed by his Consistory to welcome the delegates. De Ronde, formerly one of the most strenuous of the Conferentie, was appointed to preach a sermon. This he did on Ephesians vi. 23: “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” It was an elegant and impressive discourse, before a vast assembly, and in which he thanked the brethren for their willingness to convene for the purpose of peace and unity, and urged them to the same. He expressed his heartiest wishes for success in their endeavors. This was a most happy beginning. Dr. Livingston was elected president, while the learned Rysdyck and the universally respected Westerlo were chosen clerks. Out of the thirty-four ministers and the more than one hundred churches now composing the denomination, twenty-two ministers and twenty-five elders, representing in all thirty-four churches, were present. Of the whole ministry of the church at this time (1771) fifteen were Europeans,



eight of whom were in this convention; eleven had been ordained in America, nine of whom were present; while there were eight ministers remaining of those who had gone to Holland for ordination, of whom five were present. As to the parties into which the church was divided, while several on either side had died, there were now eleven ministers recognized as belonging to the Conferentie, of whom seven were in this convention; there were thirteen acknowledged Coetus men, of whom ten were present; and there were ten accounted more or less neutral, of whom five were present. Westerlo was accounted a neutral in the convention, although his name appears the year before in the charter of Queen's College, which was secured by the Coetus party. It is also remarkable that he did not finally sign the Articles of Union, but no doubt because his congregation yet stood aloof.

A committee of twelve was appointed, representing equally the three sections of the convention, and composed equally of ministers and elders. The Conferentie was represented by De Ronde and Rysdyck, with Elders Van Zandt and Snediker. De Ronde had passed through a bitter experience, and came to the work of reconciliation with a chastened spirit. His almost involuntary lead of the "Dutch party" for several years previously, and their utter discomfiture in the lawsuit, and great pecuniary expense, with the rich spiritual success of Laidlie's preaching in English, softened his heart, and qualified him to utter the opening sermon on peace and love; while Rysdyck, who alone of his party was willing to indorse the previous Plan of Union with Princeton, had thereby manifested his pacific disposition.

The Coetus was represented by Hardenbergh and Verbrück, with the elders Fisher and Zabriskie. All of these had been named a year and a half before among the orig-



inal trustees of Queen's College. It must have required no little grace in such enterprising men to ignore all reference to their new charter in the Plan of Union; or did these far-sighted men understand that though their college must for the moment be ignored, circumstances would surely, in time, make its necessity felt?

The neutral brethren were represented by Livingston and Westerlo, with the elders Roosevelt and Gansevoort. Westerlo, for eleven years, had preserved the confidence and respect of both parties, while he had formally united with neither. Dr. Livingston was, of course, the principal agent in the whole transaction.

The plan<sup>1</sup> brought from Holland, and already indorsed provisionally, was now presented. It was admirably adapted to conciliate all parties. Only slight amendments were made, when it was unanimously adopted in the committee. The Assembly likewise adopted it without a dissenting voice. It was to have no force until finally approved by the Classis of Amsterdam. This satisfied the Conferentie, while the substantial independence gained satisfied the Coetus.

The preamble acknowledged a bond of union with the church in Holland, but stated that certain misunderstandings had grown up respecting it; and to prevent these misunderstandings in the future, and in accordance with the advice of the Classis, they now united and pledged themselves to regulate their ecclesiastical government and union with the mother-church in Holland in the following manner:

They would abide by the doctrines of the Netherland

<sup>1</sup> Document 1110 in "Amst. Cor." See "Manual," 1869, p. 10. Several translations of this have been made. The one in "Minutes of General Synod," vol. i., pp. 1-20, was made by Rev. William Demarest, about 1856. Dr. Schoonmaker's translation is found as an Appendix to "Minutes of General Synod of 1815," vol. ii.

Reformed Church and its constitution as established in the Synod of Dort. One general body and five particular bodies were to be organized, which were to meet annually. This general body was to assume the long-desired privilege of licensing and ordaining men to the ministry; but the names of all such, together with the names of all newly called ministers, and of such as changed their vocations, were to be transmitted to Holland for *registration*, together with a copy of their acts from year to year. Appeals *might* also be carried to Holland. One or more professors were to be chosen from the Netherlands with the advice of the Classis, but they were to have no connection with *any English academies*. This plainly refers to King's College and to Princeton. Does it also include New Brunswick? But inasmuch as this professorship could not become available for a considerable time, those students who had studied under different ministers were to be provisionally examined in the next General Assembly.

Certain articles were added respecting the healing of disputes and the recognition of ministers whom the Coetus had ordained without permission. This whole plan was to be ratified by the Classis of Amsterdam before it was of any binding authority. Upon its indorsement by the convention, "each member shall provisionally give the other the hand of fellowship, in hope that the reverend Classis, as well as our congregations, will approve this plan."

Copies of this plan were then transmitted to the several churches and to the Classis of Amsterdam, and arrangements made for another meeting as soon as answers were received.

A letter from the convention to the Classis<sup>1</sup> accom-

<sup>1</sup> "Amst. Cor.," Letter IIII; this was printed in the "Christian Intelligencer," August 19, 1852.

panied the plan, and another from the New York Consistory.<sup>1</sup> Answers of congratulation were received. In their reply to the New York Consistory (January 14, 1772) the Classis says: "Concerning the professorate, we can determine nothing—that must be left to the general meeting of the brethren; meanwhile it occurs that, possibly, in the pressing necessity there is for a professor of theology, the brethren might find in their own body a suitable person, who, though not born in the Netherlands, has studied and received his ordination there."<sup>2</sup>

A second convention was now called, according to arrangement (June 16, 1772).<sup>3</sup> Twenty-six ministers were present and forty-three elders. The Classical letter to the convention, approving the Plan of Union, was read, to the general joy of all. It is as follows:<sup>4</sup>

#### THE LETTER OF THE CLASSIS OF AMSTERDAM.

*"To the Convention of United Brethren, Ministers, and Elders of the Reformed Dutch Churches in New York and New Jersey:*

"REVEREND AND MUCH-RESPECTED BRETHREN: We received your friendly letter, with the accompanying documents, dated October 18th, just previous to the close of the year, and in season to present them at the first Classical meeting in the new year, that they might take them into consideration, and communicate the result of their deliberations as speedily as practicable. We have learned from the documents you have sent to us, with great joy, that the God of peace has inclined the hearts of the brethren, long divided by unhappy contention, to seek delightful peace and reunion in brotherly love; so that, by the

<sup>1</sup> Letter 1112.

<sup>2</sup> Letter 1122.

<sup>3</sup> Document 1128.

<sup>4</sup> "Amst. Cor.," Letter 1121.



friendly invitation of the Consistory of the church in New York, most of them assembled in that city, and, after a session of four days, were reconciled and united to each other. We also learn that the absent brethren, mostly prevented by circumstances of a domestic nature, have given the assured hope that they will be satisfied with the Plan of Union. We have not in a long time been so much rejoiced by gratifying intelligence from our churches in foreign lands as by that now received from you, which is 'good tidings from a far country,' like water refreshing to our souls, weary and thirsty by reason of our former correspondence in relation to existing difficulties. Well may we, in the congregation of God's people, offer up our joyful songs of praise to the God of peace. We desire with our whole hearts, and in pure, disinterested love to the brethren of the church, that this peace and union may be universal and prove perpetual. The pious zeal of the Consistory of New York, the willingness and readiness of the brethren to respond to their invitation to assemble in convention, the pious and edifying character of their deliberations during their session of four days, and the declared assent of most of their absent brethren, conspire to warrant the well-grounded hope that such will be the result. In order speedily to confirm and bring to conclusion this sacred work of peace, and to allow no languor or delay, we have in our Classical meeting attentively read and maturely considered the proposed articles adopted by the brethren present as a basis of union. These articles essentially correspond with the plan heretofore proposed by us, and appear to be wisely adapted to the peculiar circumstances and condition of the churches of New York and New Jersey. The Classis, cordially desirous to see peace and harmony restored and established among their brethren in the common faith in America, wish it to be exten-



sively published that they have heartily and unanimously approved the Plan of Union, without proposing any alteration or addition; and they express their ardent hope that the brethren not present at the convention lately held in New York may be animated with the same zeal for the attainment of peace and harmony, and adopt the Plan of Union without suggesting any material alteration.

“ We trust that our full approbation will tend to promote this most desirable end in your entire unanimity. Still the general convention of the united brethren and churches not only claims the freedom, but (according to the import of the articles now approved by us) feels itself bound further to make such stipulations and additions as the interests and welfare of the churches may require. We therefore request the brethren who have signed the articles of the Plan of Union (having entire confidence in their love of and devotion to the cause of peace) to employ all their efforts for the accomplishment of the proposed object, and especially to seek the reconciliation of the church at Kingston with their minister, Rev. H. Meyer. We are rejoiced to hear that he yielded, with the other brethren, his full approbation to the Articles of Union, and hope that the reconciliation between him and the church may soon be effected, through the kind mediation of the brethren, unto mutual satisfaction and rejoicing. We cheer ourselves with the hope which you have expressed to us, that when our ready and full approbation of the Articles of Union shall be sent to those particular churches which have not signed them; it will exert such a strong influence as to lead to their acquiescence and approbation. Thus a speedy adoption of the articles as conditions of peace will, before long, bring to an end all divisions and dissensions, cause them to be ever forgotten, and unite the hearts of the brethren so closely that they shall continually remain a well-cemented

body, abiding in one spirit, and with one accord striving for the faith of the gospel. Thus shall the mother-church of the Netherlands remain in close connection with her daughter dwelling in a distant country, in the unity of faith and love, and built on one common constitution. Thus, also, the churches of New York and New Jersey may successfully appeal to the civil authorities, with good hope of success, for the maintenance of their ecclesiastical freedom and privileges, preserving fully the character of Reformed Dutch churches, as originally organized. Thus may our Reformed Church in your land, in the midst of so many denominations as surround her, exhibit the beautiful and attractive appearance of the Lamb's bridal church, 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' Over your peaceful church, animated by truth and love, inseparable, united, God will command his 'blessing; even life forevermore,' even as 'on a habitation of righteousness and a mountain of holiness,' the fragrance of which shall spread all around, and attract many to her communion, as members of the 'one body in Christ.' Nothing can prove more delightful to us who have, with a disinterested spirit, strongly exhorted the brethren to a reconciliation and union, and, at the same time, to a close correspondence with the Reformed Church of Holland, and continued attachment to her faith and order, than henceforth to see the churches of New York and New Jersey a *true Philadelphia*, where the Lord loves to dwell. For this end we entreat, in behalf of the brethren and churches, the direction of the 'wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.' May the hearts of all flow together into one, and be bound together in love, which is the bond of perfectness. Thus 'the fruit of righteousness shall be sown in

peace of them that make peace'; yea, the God of peace shall impart the earnest of salvation to those on whom he pronounces the blessedness of the peacemaker, and furnish therein the evidence of their heavenly sonship. Commending you to God's manifold and best blessing for this and continued years, yourselves, your families, your churches and ecclesiastical assemblies,

"We remain, reverend and respected brethren, with true brotherly love and regard, your fellow-servants and brethren in Christ,

"N. TETTERODE,  
"V.D.M. Amst. et Deputatorum Classis  
ad res exteras, h. t. Praeses.

"JOHANNIS ARN. ECK,  
"V.D.M. Amst. et Dep. Classis ad  
res exteras, h. t. p. Scriba.

"AMSTERDAM: done in Classical Session, Jan. 14, 1772."

The Plan of Union was now subscribed by almost all the delegates present, and arrangements were made for the subscription of those congregations not represented, by inserting the plan in the minutes of the new Classes which were about to be organized. During the sixteen years of division the Coetus had ordained nine men, and the Conferentie but a single one. Thirteen ministers had come from Holland during the same period to serve the churches, which were now about one hundred in number (1772). Twenty-seven of these had been organized during the period of strife, not from strife in general, but from necessity. A half-dozen or more of the whole number had originally been French Reformed, and about twenty German Reformed (all in the province of New Netherland), most of which were gradually Hollandized, and ultimately Anglicized, as to language. In these one hundred churches,



during the century and a half of colonial dependence, one hundred and twelve ministers had officiated, of whom thirty-four were living at the union of the two parties.

#### THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD (1771-92).

The church was now substantially independent, but twenty-one years more were required before it dared to assert unequivocally its majority by a new constitution. The Articles of Union betray the extreme delicacy of the situation: "We organize . . . such ecclesiastical bodies as are consistent with the government and constitution of the Church of the Netherlands, and *our relation to the same*, and under such titles *as shall hereafter be determined*. They shall *provisionally* be called a General Body and Particular Bodies." These bodies corresponded in every respect to a Synod and Classes, except that the Particular Bodies were not allowed to license and ordain men for the ministry. They could approve of calls made on ordained ministers, but not of calls made on candidates. Even this was yet jealously reserved to the General Body. It had once been claimed that the Coetus, according to church order, was an anomalous body. There does not appear any reference to the fact that the present arrangement was equally anomalous. A few ministers and churches continued to stand aloof from this union for several years, but in the main harmony was restored, and the two parties cordially coöperated; for it was not policy now which chiefly bound them together, but CHRISTIAN LOVE.

The time of the new General Body, until the opening of the war, was occupied with efforts to conciliate the few outstanding congregations, to establish peace and harmony in certain districts where strife had reigned, in discussing the best manner of initiating a ministerial Widows' Fund,



and especially in considering that great and most important subject of all, the PROFESSORATE. Each of the Particular Bodies likewise deliberated upon this topic from year to year.

Negotiations were begun, within a year and a half after the consummation of the union (October, 1773), between the trustees of Queen's College and the church. The trustees had raised, within two years after their charter was granted, funds from New Jersey alone, for the endowment of the college, to the amount of \$20,000. They now wrote <sup>1</sup> to the Classis of Amsterdam and to the theological faculty of the University of Utrecht, asking them to recommend a proper person to be both president of their college and professor of divinity therein, believing that such an arrangement would also recommend their institution to the approval of the church. They urged upon the church that New Brunswick was the most proper place for the professor's residence. The college was already located there, and they would call the professor elected by the church as the president of their institution, thus lightening the burden of expense for each. The General Body was pleased with the plan, but the recent division was yet too fresh to make it practicable.

But the colonial period was about to end. A dark war-cloud was beginning to loom up ominously on the horizon. The "Sons of Liberty" were busily at work. Two months before the battle of Bunker Hill the church appointed a day of humiliation and prayer in behalf of the evils which seemed to be threatening the land. During the mighty struggle the Reformed Dutch Church was in hearty sympathy with the cause of freedom. Her pulpits "rang with stirring appeals which roused the patriotic ardor and inspired the martial courage of the people." The scene of

<sup>1</sup> Letters 1137, 1138, 1142, 1143.

the war was chiefly on the territory of the Dutch Church, and not a few of her church-buildings were destroyed, and her ministers were often driven from their homes.<sup>1</sup> The church memorialized the legislature of New York in 1780, speaking of the present JUST AND NECESSARY WAR. At its close, Domine Rubel was deposed for certain immoralities and for his *Toryism*. The mere mention of the names of Schuneman, Hardenbergh, Foering, Romeyn, Livingston, Westerlo, Du Bois, Leydt, and many others in the ministry, at once suggests the stories of their patriotism.

As soon as independence was gained it was resolved to drop the awkward names of General Body and Particular Bodies, and to assume the names of Synod and Classes. In the same year the Synod elected Dr. John H. Livingston as their professor of theology, and Dr. Hermanus Meyer as instructor in the *inspired* languages. In 1788 a committee was appointed to translate and publish the doctrinal symbols of the church and the Articles of Church Government. In reference to the latter some modifications were found to be necessary to adapt them to the American church. Hence, while preserving the eighty-four Articles of Dort on Church Order, there were added to these seventy-three Explanatory Articles, showing how the former were to be applied to the American Dutch Church.

The Explanatory Articles particularly enlarged on the subject of candidates, their qualifications, the manner of their entering the ministry, and the privileges which belonged to them as such; a formula which licentiates must subscribe was also incorporated, as well as a formula for the subscriptions of ministers before ordination. Article VIII. of Dort permitted dispensations from the full course of studies by permission of the Synod. No remarks were

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. J. A. Todd's "Centennial Discourse," 1876.

made upon this. The subject of *ministers emeriti* was somewhat enlarged upon, as well as the parity of ministers, styling them all BISHOPS. The brief Article XVIII. of Dort, relating to professors of theology, was elaborated into seven Explanatory Articles. The particular duties of elders and deacons were explained more fully, as well as the desirability of calling a Great Consistory in all important matters. An article was added on *Church-masters* (Ex. Art. XXX.), who were a committee on repairs of churches, parsonages, and school-buildings, and who were to execute the orders of the Consistory. The brief Article XXXVII. of Dort on Consistories was elaborated into five Explanatory Articles, referring to discipline and the matter of ministerial calls. Our present form of call was now for the first prepared and inserted. It was composed by Domine Westerlo. The particular powers and duties of the Classes were more fully defined in some particulars. The power of examining students was given to the Classes, although a student or licentiate could yet be examined by the Particular Synod if he so preferred. The deputies of the Synod were always to be present at examinations by the Classes, and to report to the Synod.

The Article XLI. of Dort, directing the president of the Classis to inquire of the respective members "whether church discipline be exercised; whether the poor and the schools be properly taken care of; and whether they stand in need of the advice and assistance of the Classis in anything respecting the regulation of their churches"; and Article XLIV., directing each Classis to appoint *visitors*, "whose business it shall be to inquire whether the ministers, Consistories, and schoolmasters do faithfully discharge their offices; whether they adhere to sound doctrine; whether they observe in all things the received discipline," etc., were expounded in Explanatory Article XLIV.:



“Once every year the Classis shall direct what shall be deemed necessary and practicable with regard to the visitation of the churches within their respective jurisdictions, and report the same to the Synod. For the more uniform and proper execution of this important duty, such particular questions and inquiries as shall be agreed upon in any General Synod for that purpose shall be inserted in the book of records of every Classis, and by the visitors be faithfully proposed to the minister, elders, and deacons of every congregation in their respective visitations.”

The particular powers and duties of the General Synod and of Particular Synods were more fully defined. The latter were to be representative bodies, consisting of two ministers and two elders from each Classis. They might yet examine and license students. They were “to exchange every year a copy of their acts with the Synod of North Holland, and express in their letters the desire of the Reformed Church in America to preserve a connection and cultivate a correspondence which they highly esteem and have found to be beneficial” (Ex. Art. L.).

It had been found impracticable in Holland to hold a triennial General Synod (notwithstanding Article L. of Dort so directed), owing chiefly to certain civil complications. Hence the several Particular Synods in Holland exercised each the powers of a General Synod within their respective local jurisdictions, and adopted a mutual correspondence. The General Synod in Holland, according to the above article, was to consist of two ministers and two elders from every Particular Synod both of the Dutch and Walloon Churches. But in America it was determined that the General Synod should be conventional, consisting of all the ministers in the church and an elder from each *congregation*. It was to meet triennially. The General Synod, however, was given the privilege of changing its



conventional character to a representative character by resolution.

Explanatory Article LIX. is also worthy of special mention, as showing the position of the church at that time on slavery: "In the church there is no difference between bond and free, but all are one in Christ. Whenever, therefore, slaves or black people shall be baptized, or become members in full communion of the church, they shall be admitted to equal privileges with all other members of the same standing; and their infant children shall be entitled to baptism, and in every respect be treated with the same attention that the children of white or free parents are in the church. Any minister who, upon any pretense, shall refuse to admit slaves or their children to the privileges to which they are entitled, shall, upon complaint being exhibited and proved, be severely reprimanded by the Classis to which he belongs."

The subject of godparents or sponsors was declared to be a matter of little importance. The subject of catechising children was emphasized, as well as that of pastoral visitations. The subject of holy days was referred to, advising ministers, at their discretion, to preach on those days, so as to turn people from idleness unto edifying themes.

The Synod reviewed this whole work *seriatim* in 1792, and formally adopted it. The General Synod was organized on June 3, 1794, and the old Synod became a Particular Synod. For a decade preceding, the terms General and Particular had been applied indiscriminately to the old body. During this transitional period no ministers came from Holland. The General Body or Synod licensed and ordained thirty-seven men for the ministry, and directed the Classis of Hackensack to license and ordain one *in their name*—viz., Isaac Blauvelt—in 1780. This was done because sickness had twice prevented him from meeting with

the Synod. Eleven of these men had entered the ministry before the appointment of the professor, and twenty-seven had subsequently produced the professor's certificate. William Linn had come from the Presbyterians in 1787, and Winslow Paige from the Congregationalists in 1792; Peter van Vlierden had come from the West Indies in the same year. There were forty-one accessions to the ministry, and thirty churches organized, during this period.

PERIOD IV.  
CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL FREEDOM.





## CHAPTER VI.

### THE GENERAL PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH SINCE 1792.

DURING the whole preceding period of one hundred and sixty-four years (1628-1792) the Reformed Dutch Church had only been passing through the successive stages which were necessary to bring her into her ecclesiastical freedom and fit her for her future work. The migration of Holland's sons to America, chiefly under the West India Company's sway, during a half-century (1614-64), was merely the planting of the seed. The struggle with the English governors (1664-1705) to establish a church representing a very small minority of the population proved to be the undesigned cause of the charters which the Dutch alone of all religious bodies outside the Episcopal Church were able to secure. The imperfect piety which naturally resulted from these contests and from unfrequent services was followed by a gracious revival, which excited many holy aspirations after increased usefulness (1705-47). In order to gratify these desires came the period of association of the scattered ministers and churches (1747-54), who compared views and sought more fully to meet the great spiritual necessities of the people, failing, however, to appreciate the importance of services in English; and when the earlier plans of association were found to be insufficient, better plans were devised, and were attempted

to be carried into execution (1754). But a peculiar combination of circumstances, in which some leaders in the church were allured into a false position, produced an unhappy strife, which was unduly prolonged (1755-71) and delayed the consummation. But Christian love finally prevailed, and secured a union of the parties (1771). Hardly, however, had they begun their new work when the Revolution (1776-83), prevailing especially on the territory of the Dutch Church, scattered the ministers and destroyed not a few of the churches. But with the success of civil liberty came to all denominations ecclesiastical autonomy, with all that is involved therein—independent organizations, a sense of responsibility, literary and theological institutions, with benevolent boards for the increase of Christ's kingdom at home and its dissemination to the ends of the earth.

## I. HISTORY OF THE CONSTITUTION.

The constitution of the church consists of its standards of doctrine, its liturgy, and its rules of church order or government.

1. The standards of doctrine have remained unaltered, and consist of the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, with the Compendium of the same, and the Canons of the Synod of Dort.

2. The original liturgy consisted of sacramental forms, forms of ordination of ministers, of elders and deacons, with certain forms of discipline, marriage, consolation of the sick, and various forms of prayer. The Nicene Creed and the Creed of Athanasius are appended, not to the standards of doctrine, but to the liturgy. Several attempts have been made to revise the liturgy, but none of the proposed changes have been successful, although some of the older forms

have fallen into desuetude. A few new forms have been added, such as a form for the ordination of missionaries, for the dedication of a church, for the reception of those into full communion who have been baptized in infancy, etc. But all forms except the sacramental are optional as to use.

3. The Articles of Church Government, as adopted at Dort in 1619, with the Explanatory Articles adopted in 1792, continued unchanged, except a few minor amendments, until 1832, when these two sets of articles were thoroughly fused into one new expression of church government. There was no change in the general spirit of the instrument. The system of Classical visitors, a remnant of the old superintendency, was abolished, and the series of constitutional questions to be asked of ministers and elders once a year was now formulated. The limit of time for explaining the system of doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism was now extended from one year to four. The privilege of granting *dispensations* from the usual course of studies required of those preparing for the ministry was abolished. The church was also then just entering on its more systematized aggressive work through more fully organized boards.

In 1872, forty years having again elapsed, a third revision was undertaken, which was finally adopted in 1874. The principal changes were an elaboration of the articles relating to discipline; to the right of a Classis, by a two-thirds vote, to dissolve the pastoral relation, one of the parties being unwilling; and to the excision of the requirement of the attendance of *deputati Synodi* at examinations. The privilege of granting dispensations from the regular course of study was restored.

The church had been known previously to 1867 as the Reformed Dutch Church or the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church. It had been incorporated in 1819 under the lat-

ter name. In 1867 the name was changed to the REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA.<sup>1</sup>

## II. ECCLESIASTICAL BODIES.

1. *Churches*.—The churches now existing number six hundred and twelve. For details and Bibliography, see "Manual of the Reformed Church in America," 1879.

2. *Classes*.—Immediately after permission was granted to hold a Coetus, that body divided the church into *Circles*. These were three in number, viz., New York, 1747; Jersey, 1747; Albany, 1747. The Circle of Orange was formed in 1750. In 1755 an independent American Classis was formed, while an opposition Conference of a few ministers, without elders, was also held. In 1764 these ministers, with their elders, organized a body styled "An Assembly Subordinate to the Classis of Amsterdam." In 1771, by the healing of the division, provisional organizations were formed by the Articles of Union, under which five Particular Bodies, or Classes, were formed, namely, Albany, Hackensack, Kingston, New Brunswick, and New York. In all forty-three Classes have been organized. These have been modified by consolidation and rearrangements, so that at present there are thirty-five, as may be seen by the following table, the extinct names being *italicized*:

New York, N. Y.....	1772	Montgomery, N. Y.....	1800
Albany, N. Y.....	"	Paramus .....	"
New Brunswick, N. J.....	"	Poughkeepsie.....	"
<i>Kingston, N. Y.....</i>	<i>1772-1800</i>	Rensselaer .....	"
<i>Hackensack, N. J.....</i>	<i>" "</i>	Ulster .....	"
Bergen, N. J.....	1800	<i>Long Island.....</i>	<i>1813-1843</i>

<sup>1</sup> See the able article on the history of the name in the Appendix to "Minutes of General Synod," 1867.



Philadelphia .....	1814	Holland .....	1851
Washington .....	1818-1857	Geneva .....	1852-1887
Cayuga .....	1826-1889	Westchester .....	1852
Schenectady .....	1826	Arcot (India) .....	1854
Schoharie .....	"	Monmouth .....	"
<i>South Classis of New York,</i>		Wisconsin .....	1855
	1828-1876	Kingston .....	1856
Orange .....	1832	Saratoga .....	1857
Greene .....	1834	Raritan .....	1859
Passaic .....	1839	Grand River .....	1870
Illinois .....	1841	Newark .....	1872
Michigan .....	"	South Classis of Bergen .....	1873
North Classis of Long Island ..	1843	Iowa .....	1885
South Classis of Long Island ..	"	Rochester .....	1887
Hudson .....	1845	Dakota .....	1888
<i>Watervliet .....</i>	1845-1857	Pleasant Prairie .....	1892

3. *Synods*.—When the two parties came together in 1771 they called themselves "A Reverend Meeting of Ministers and Elders," and only dared to talk of a General and certain Particular ecclesiastical Bodies. But immediately after the Revolution they gathered boldness and resolved to apply the names of Synod and Classes to these respective bodies. This original Synod was a mere transitional body (1771-92) between the period of infantile dependence on a foreign church and that of complete independence. It called a convention in 1792, and a General Synod,<sup>1</sup> conventional in character and entirely independent, was organized in 1794, upon an Americanized constitution. The old provisional Synod, which had formerly been conventional, was henceforth to consist of two ministers and two elders from each Classis, and this now took the character of a Particular Synod. It continued to examine students equally with the Classes, upon whom the power was also now bestowed, although the Classes could not do this without deputies from the Synod being present.

<sup>1</sup> The General Synod administers much of the business of the church through a Board of Corporation. More recently the several benevolent boards have also been incorporated.

In 1800 this Particular Synod was dissolved, and the two Particular Synods of New York and Albany constituted. After 1800 the Particular Synods ceased to examine, although their right to do so continued until 1832. They met yearly, while the General Synod met triennially until 1812. In 1800 it was resolved that a delegation of eight ministers and eight elders from each Particular Synod shall constitute the General Synod, but not more than two ministers and two elders were to be taken from the same Classis. In 1809 a new organization was deemed expedient. A delegation of three ministers and three elders from each Classis was agreed to, and in 1812, also, it was determined to hold annual sessions. In the revised constitution of 1874 all Classes having more than fifteen churches were allowed one additional minister and elder for each additional five churches. In 1856 the Particular Synod of Chicago was constituted, and in 1869 the Particular Synod of New Brunswick.

The following is a list of these more general bodies :

1. The Coetus (1747-54). In 1754 the Coetus became a Classis for the whole church (1754-71).
2. The Reverend Meeting of Ministers and Elders, or the provisional Synod (1771-92). In 1793 this body became a Particular Synod for the whole church (1793-1800).
3. The General Synod (1794).
4. The Particular Synod of New York (1800).
5. " " " Albany (1800).
6. " " " Chicago (1856).
7. " " " New Brunswick (1869).

### III. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

1. *Rutgers College*.—The history of this college has frequently been written, and we need not repeat the

details here. The charter for an academy for the Dutch alone was obtained in 1766. This was replaced by a more liberal charter in 1770 for Queens College. Endowments were in progress for this institution, which were swept away by the Revolution. Negotiations were several times attempted for uniting Queens College with the theological professorship, but these plans were not practically consummated until 1810. In 1825, through financial embarrassments, the college property was deeded to the General Synod, and the name of Rutgers College was taken, to commemorate a liberal donor, Colonel Henry Rutgers. In 1864 the Synod deeded back the property to the trustees of the college. From 1810 to 1864 the theological professors also taught in the college. The presidents have been Rev. Dr. Jacob R. Hardenbergh (1771-90); Rev. Dr. John H. Livingston (1810-25); Rev. Dr. Philip Milledoler (1825-40); Hon. A. Bruyn Hasbrouck, LL.D. (1840-50); Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen, LL.D. (1850-62); Rev. Dr. William H. Campbell (1862-82); Dr. Merrill E. Gates (1882-90); Dr. Austin Scott (1890).

For many years after the Revolution the country was too impoverished properly to endow the institution. A beginning was, indeed, made, but much of this money was consumed in building the beautiful edifice now known as Queens Building, in 1809. The president's house was added in 1842, now used as a Fine Arts Building, and Van Nest Hall in 1845. The endowment grew slowly, but the theological professors, who also taught in the college, were largely supported by their own theological chairs.

With the accession of Dr. Campbell to the presidency a new era opened for the institution. The endowments were greatly increased, the course of instruction was wonderfully enlarged, and new and beautiful buildings began to adorn the campus. The college was founded to prepare a min-



istry for the Dutch Church. Dr. Campbell presented its claims in this light, and nearly \$150,000 soon crowned his efforts. It was through his instrumentality that the college property was purchased back from the General Synod, and from that time (1864) the college became independent of the church. He also secured, in the early part of his presidency, the creation of the Rutgers Scientific School. The State of New Jersey made this school the State College for Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts, and conferred upon it the rights and privileges provided in the national law of 1862. The proceeds of the sale of certain public lands were allotted to this State College. These amounted to \$116,000. Out of this beginning has grown the important scientific department of the college, which has recently assumed so commanding a position. In 1870 the college celebrated its centennial, and Chief-Justice Bradley, one of its graduates, delivered the historical address. The centennial endowment funds now swelled the amounts raised by Dr. Campbell to nearly \$300,000. During his famous presidency an Astronomical Observatory was built in 1865; a Geological Hall in 1873, at a cost of \$62,000; the Sophia Astley Kirkpatrick Chapel, with a Library attached, at a cost of \$52,000; also the Grammar School was rebuilt. The College Farm cost about \$30,000. Altogether during this period more than half a million was added to the funds and property of the institution. During Dr. Gates's presidency New Jersey Hall was added to the buildings, costing \$40,000, and Winants Hall, costing \$80,000. An additional building has been purchased during Dr. Scott's presidency to meet the growing demands of the Grammar School, and Van Nest Hall has been enlarged to give increased accommodations in lecture-rooms. A fine Gymnasium has also been erected, at an expense of \$60,000, by Robert Ballantine, of Newark, N. J. Rutgers



College has sent about five hundred of its graduates into the ministry of the Reformed Church.

2. *Union College* developed out of the Schenectady Academy, which was founded by Rev. Dr. Dirck Romeyn in 1785. A college charter was obtained in 1795. Dr. Romeyn was a Dutch clergyman, and also a professor of theology in his own house. During the first forty years of this institution it sent more of its graduates to the New Brunswick Seminary than Rutgers College did in its first sixty years. Henry V. V. Raymond, D.D., is the present efficient president.<sup>1</sup>

3. *Hope College*, at Holland, Mich., grew out of the Holland Academy in that place. A parochial school was started in 1850 to meet the necessities of the more recent Holland immigrants in the West. In 1855 this school became the Holland Academy, and in 1866 a charter was obtained for Hope College. Its presidents have been Rev. Dr. Philip Phelps (1866-78); Rev. Dr. Giles H. Mandeville (provisional, 1878-80); Rev. Dr. Charles Scott (vice-president and acting president, 1878-80; provisional president, 1880-85; president, 1885-93); Gerrit J. Kollen (1893). This institution has already graduated nearly five hundred students, of whom nearly two hundred have entered the ministry of the Reformed Church. In addition to the eight buildings previously acquired there, a beautiful chapel and library building have recently been completed, known as the Graves Library and the Winants Chapel. The endowment is now approximating a quarter of a million. Other institutions, the germs of colleges, are springing up at Orange City and elsewhere through the inspiration of these thrifty and persevering Hollanders.

4. The *Theological Seminary* at New Brunswick, N. J.,

<sup>1</sup> For fuller particulars, see "Manual," 1879, p. 116, and "Schenectady Church Memorial."

was founded in 1784 by the election of Rev. Dr. John H. Livingston as professor of theology. He for many years taught in New York City, or at Flatbush, L. I. Other professors were elected in other parts of the church to carry on theological instruction for the convenience of students. In 1810 these efforts were concentrated at New Brunswick. The institution struggled for many years under financial difficulties, but endowments gradually accumulated, and at length the seminary was placed on a generous foundation. From 1810 to 1864 it was operated in conjunction with Rutgers College. In 1856 Mrs. Ann Hertzog, of Philadelphia, Pa., erected Hertzog Hall in memory of her husband, Peter Hertzog, M. D. Eight other buildings have since clustered about this central one, constituting now a magnificent property, almost unequaled for situation and healthfulness. Five chairs are endowed. The Gardner A. Sage Library gives every opportunity for research and study. The institution has sent forth nearly a thousand students into the ministry.

5. The *Western Theological Seminary* was for a time in close union with Hope College. Elementary theological instruction began with the chartering of that institution. The seminary was founded in 1869, and is slowly but surely developing in strength and prosperity. It now has three chairs of theology.

#### IV. THE BENEVOLENT BOARDS.

1. The *Board of Education* was organized by private individuals in 1828. Collections had previously been taken up in the churches to aid needy students preparing for the ministry. These funds were disbursed by the Board of Superintendents of the New Brunswick Seminary. In 1814 the first installments of the Van Bunschoten Fund began to

be paid in, which gave additional help. This fund is \$20,000. Miss Rebecca Knox in 1815 left \$2000 for the benefit of students. The General Synod adopted the Board of Education in 1831. Benevolent individuals have endowed scholarships now amounting to about \$160,000, which are held by the General Synod; and the Board of Education, since their incorporation, have received about \$61,000 more, making a total of \$221,000. Collections swell the income. Students receive \$150 per year. Rutgers College also holds funds for the same purpose, amounting to about \$130,000—in all a quarter of a million to help students preparing for the ministry.

2. The *Widows' Fund* was practically started in 1837. Ministers pay \$20 per annum to secure an interest in this fund, or their churches do it for them. It has grown by collections and special bequests until it has reached the sum of \$85,000. Ministers who are members of this fund, when disabled, or their widows, receive about \$200 per annum. There is also a *Disabled Ministers' Fund* of \$63,000, to assist any minister, or his family, when needy. About \$15,000 were distributed to the needy during the year 1893-94.

3. The *Board of Publication* is partly benevolent in its operations. It makes donations of books and tracts for evangelistic purposes. It was organized in 1855. Its present headquarters are at 25 East 22d Street, New York, where also are the offices of all the boards, and a delightful room for ministerial gatherings on Monday mornings.

4. *Domestic Missions* were hindered for a while by the continued use of the Dutch language. English began to be used in New York in 1763, with the call of Rev. Archibald Laidlie; but Dutch and English contended with each other in many of the rural districts until about 1820. In 1786 efforts began to be made to extend the church in



destitute localities. In that year Saratoga petitioned the Synod for a minister. The Classis of Albany acted for many years as the agent of the Synod to look after destitute localities in the North. Collections were taken up to defray the expenses of ministers, who left their pulpits for three months on preaching-tours through central and western New York and on the north side of Lake Ontario. Many Dutch families emigrated to Pennsylvania and Kentucky, and begged for ministers. Some efforts were made to supply them, but the distance in that day made it impracticable. For many years a number of churches in Canada were cared for, but these were subsequently resigned to the Presbyterians. In 1804 the first legacy for missions was left by a Christian lady, Sarah de Peyster. In 1806 the General Synod resumed the management of all missionary operations, which for a time had been committed to the Classis of Albany. From 1806 to 1822 itinerants continued to go out under the direction of the Synod, but many of the churches planted died for lack of more frequent ministrations; but in 1822 several private individuals formed the Missionary Society of the Reformed Dutch Church. The Synod soon adopted this as its board of missions for both domestic and foreign operations. Collections were taken up at the monthly concert of prayer. Reports of the work of this society were scattered through the churches. In ten years the sum of \$30,000 was raised, with which about one hundred churches or stations were helped and one hundred and thirty missionaries employed. They felt it to be their chief duty to strengthen existing organizations. In 1828 a similar society was started at Albany. Rev. J. F. Schermerhorn imparted new life to the missionary cause, and contributions were largely increased. In 1831 the Board of Domestic Missions was organized, and under Mr. Schermerhorn's ap-



peals \$5400 were raised during the first year. This was then unprecedented. In 1837 efforts were begun in the West. A church was organized at Fairview, Ill., and others in the same State, as well as in Michigan and Wisconsin. In 1841 the Classes of Michigan and Illinois were formed, and in 1851 that of Holland. In the meantime, about 1846, the new Dutch emigration<sup>1</sup> began to pour into the West, and gave a new field of operations to the domestic missionary efforts of the church. The Domestic Board was reorganized in 1849, and Rev. Drs. John Garretson, Anson du Bois, Goyen Talmage, and Jacob West have been the corresponding secretaries. Rev. Dr. Charles H. Pool is the present corresponding secretary. In 1854 the plan of a Church Building Fund was proposed, to secure a capital fund to loan to needy churches for the erection of buildings. This fund is continually increasing. Collections are taken up for it in the churches. The total income from all sources for domestic missionary work in May, 1893, footed up at \$87,000. The Woman's Executive Committee for the same year showed receipts of nearly \$15,000.

5. The *Board of Foreign Missions* was not formally organized until 1832, but there had been considerable interest in the work before. The Church of Holland prepared elaborate instructions for her missionaries to the East Indies at the Synod of Dort (1619), and her operations had been very extensive through the East India Company, and the missionary spirit then begotten was not lost among the Dutch colonists in America.<sup>2</sup> There are frequent allusions in the correspondence of the American churches to the sad condition of the Indians, and the calls of the American ministers frequently stipulated that they should also labor to

<sup>1</sup> For a history of this movement, see "Manual of Ref. Ch. in America," 1879, pp. 74-82.

<sup>2</sup> The Archives of the Classis of Amsterdam contain all the correspondence with these East India missions.

evangelize the natives. We find, accordingly, the names of Megapolensis (1643), Schaats (1652), Dellijs (1683), and Lydius and Freeman (1700) engaged actively in this work. Not a few Indians became members of Dutch churches. Tracts were written, and portions of the Scriptures were translated, in some of the Indian dialects.<sup>1</sup> In 1663 the Dutch ministers in New York received a copy of Eliot's Indian Bible, which they sent to the Classis of Amsterdam with great joy, as an evidence of the progress of this work in New England.

In 1701 the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts was chartered in England, and in the correspondence of its ministers frequent mention is made of the labors of Dutch ministers among the Indians.<sup>2</sup> In 1709 the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge was formed in Scotland, and in 1741 a Board of Correspondence was established in New York. Under their care Horton and the Brainerds labored among the Indians on Long Island and in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and were supported by the churches generally. In 1763 the Presbyterian Synod of New York ordered collections to be taken up in all churches. Work was begun among the Oneidas in 1766, and shortly after in Ohio. The troubles then existing in the Dutch Church may have prevented any very active coöperation in this movement.

The Revolution broke up all these efforts, and the work was not resumed until 1796, when the New York Missionary Society was formed by members of the Presbyterian, Reformed Dutch, and Baptist Churches. This society was not under any denominational control. It raised \$1000

<sup>1</sup> For further particulars, see these names in "Manual of Ref. Ch. in America," 1879.

<sup>2</sup> See Anderson's "Annals of Colonial Ch.," Humphrey's "Hist. Col. Ch.," "Doc. Hist. N. Y.," vol. iii., pp. 591, 598, 698, etc.; "Classified Digest of the Records of the Soc. for Prop. Gospel," London, 1894.

during its first year, which was marvelous for that day. It sent missionaries to the Indians in Georgia, Connecticut, Long Island, to the Tuscaroras and Senecas in western New York, and elsewhere. Powerful missionary sermons began to be preached under the auspices of this society, which did much to arouse a missionary spirit in the churches. In 1797 Rev. Dr. John M. Mason preached his memorable sermon on "Messiah's Throne," from Hebrews i. 8: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." In 1798 the monthly concert was established "for the purpose of offering up their prayers and supplications to the God of grace, that he would be pleased to pour out his Spirit on his church and send his gospel to all nations." In New York City these meetings were held in rotation in the churches which invited them. Soon the monthly concert spread over the land, and wonderfully stimulated the missionary spirit. For convenience, another society, composed of the same churches, was formed at Lansingburg in 1797, and continued in existence until 1830. It sent missionaries chiefly to the Indians of the Five Nations in central New York.

In 1799 Rev. Dr. John H. Livingston preached a famous missionary sermon on "The Glory of the Redeemer," from Colossians iii. 11: "Christ is all in all," in the Scotch Presbyterian Church in Cedar Street, New York; and in 1804 his still more memorable sermon on Revelation xiv. 6, 7: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the EVERLASTING GOSPEL to preach unto them that dwell on the earth," etc. All these sermons<sup>1</sup> were repeated in many places, and printed and extensively read. They were like a clarion-call from heaven in their effects.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Drs. John Rodgers, John McKnight, William Linn, John N. Abeel, and many others preached powerful missionary sermons about this time.



Many local societies sprang up throughout the Middle States and in New England. In 1802 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church addressed circulars to all the Presbyteries, urging collections for the work and asking for suitable men. Missionaries were sent, as a result, to the Cherokees in Georgia. Reports of the labors of the Moravians, and of several European missionary societies, especially the London society, aroused such interest that in 1810 the American Board was formed, having its headquarters in Boston. In 1811 the Berean Society was organized in the New Brunswick Seminary for practical improvement in piety and to gain missionary intelligence. In 1820 it was changed into the Society of Inquiry concerning mission fields, and is still in existence. The American Board suggested, in 1811, to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the formation in New York of a body similar to the American Board, to coöperate with it; but owing to the extensive engagements of that church it did not seem feasible. But in 1816 the United Missionary Society, composed of the Presbyterian, the Dutch Reformed,<sup>1</sup> and the Associate Reformed Churches, was organized. Its object was "to spread the gospel among the Indians <sup>2</sup> of North America, the inhabitants of Mexico and South America, and in other portions of the heathen and antichristian world." Appeals now began to be made more earnestly for contributions.

It was during the existence of this society, in 1819, that John Scudder, M.D., while in professional attendance on a lady in New York, read, in an anteroom, the tract, "The Conversion of the World; or, The Claims of Six Hundred Millions," and was so deeply affected thereby that he soon

<sup>1</sup> "Minutes Gen. Synod," 1816, pp. 16, 17; 1817, pp. 6, 39, 40; 1818, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> In 1821 Dr. Milledoler makes a covenant with the Osage Indians on the Missouri to receive a missionary. ("Missionary Herald," 1821, p. 26.)



consecrated himself to mission work. He went to India as a physician, but on May 15, 1821, was ordained by a company of ministers in Ceylon, composed of Baptists, Methodists, and Congregationalists.<sup>1</sup>

Pecuniary embarrassments prevented much success to the United Missionary Society. Hence in 1826, not without considerable opposition, it was merged in the American Board. At this time it had nine missions, with about sixty missionaries. The union of the Dutch Church with the American Board, under such circumstances and conditions, lasted only six years. During this time—viz., in 1829—the devoted Rev. David Abeel sailed for the East, under the immediate care of the Seamen's Friend Society. He soon began his labors in Java and Siam. Mrs. T. C. Doremus was present at his departure, and this was, perhaps, the public beginning of her untiring zeal in the missionary cause, and out of which, in connection with Abeel's subsequent labors, developed the present important machinery of "woman's work for heathen women," and all the variety of women's missionary societies.

But it soon began to be realized that the contributions given by the Dutch Church to the American Board were used only for the organization and support of Congregational churches. Dissatisfaction increased until in 1832<sup>2</sup> a plan was adopted by which the church, while retaining the advantages of a connection with the American Board, was allowed to conduct certain missions according to its own ecclesiastical polity. A Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Dutch Church, composed of fifteen members, was accordingly organized, whose special duty it was to correspond with the American Board concerning the

<sup>1</sup> "Missionary Herald," 1822, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> In 1832 Dr. Scudder issued an earnest appeal to physicians in reference to mission work.

selection of stations, the raising of funds, and the formation of missionary societies. The consideration of the whole subject was affectionately recommended to the churches and ministers, as well as to the professors and theological students. In 1832 the church assumed the support of the stations occupied by Scudder and Abeel.<sup>1</sup> The receipts reported in 1833 were \$2106. This arrangement lasted for twenty-five years. It was during this period that the Borneo and Java Mission was conducted (1836-49). Eighteen missionaries, male and female, were employed in this mission.

In 1840 Cornelius V. A. van Dyck, a member of the Reformed church of Kinderhook, went to Syria, under the American Board. In connection with Rev. Eli Smith he labored in that field for many years. Ultimately they gave to the Arabic-speaking world a translation of the Bible in purest Arabic. It is said that this translation is hardly equaled for idiomatic beauty by that of any other tongue.

In 1840 Rev. David Lindsay also went from the Dutch Church as a missionary to South Africa, but in 1842 he became independent.

In 1856 the church's board of missions gave expression to the growing conviction that a separation from the American Board and independent action were necessary to produce a proper sense of responsibility and call out more fully the ability of the church. There was no dissatisfaction with the American Board, but it was believed that more could be accomplished for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls if the two boards acted independently. The recommendation was carefully considered by

<sup>1</sup> "Minutes Gen. Synod," 1833, p. 232. Dr. Scudder now issued a most earnest appeal to ministers.

the General Synod and referred to the Synod of 1857. At Ithaca, N. Y., in that year, while enjoying unusual evidences of the presence of the Holy Spirit, the Synod resolved to discontinue the relations which had existed so pleasantly and profitably for nearly a third of a century (1826-57), and to undertake to maintain and govern its own missionary operations. Through the blessing of God the result has justified the plan. The separation was amicably effected. In the same year the American Board transferred to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Dutch Church the Amoy Mission in China and the Arcot Mission in India, with the missionaries composing them. The real estate and other property were transferred by deed dated August 25, 1858.<sup>1</sup> The contributions, which in 1857 were only \$10,076, rose during the next full year to \$25,034, and have almost uniformly increased every year since. In 1893 the total receipts from all sources for foreign missions were \$136,688. In 1894 the amount, owing to the financial depression, was only \$106,571.

In 1875, in accordance with a recommendation from General Synod, the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America was organized. Its objects were to awaken a deeper interest in missionary work among the women of the church, and thus to extend the operations. In 1880 it assumed the support of the work for women and girls in all the mission fields, including the maintenance of the several seminaries for girls in China, India, and Japan. Its contributions have steadily risen as the work increased, and have always been more than sufficient for the purpose named. In 1894 they amounted to \$20,317.

In 1842 the Amoy Mission in China was organized,

<sup>1</sup> "Minutes Gen. Synod," 1859, p. 378; 1862, p. 120.



which has recently celebrated its semi-centennial. The field was chosen by David Abeel. Abeel, Doty, and Pohlman may be considered the founders of this mission, while John V. N. Talmage was its acknowledged bishop, by force of character, for nearly half a century. The missionaries of the American Presbyterian Church and of the English Presbyterian Church have united with the Reformed in one ecclesiastical organization, having formed a Tai-hoey, or Classis, in 1862. The London Mission, Congregational, also cordially coöperates. The Reformed Church has sent about forty missionaries, male and female, to this field, of whom about twenty are now in active work. Their ten churches have about a thousand communicants, nine native pastors, sixteen helpers, many schools, and a theological seminary. The natives have contributed in all about \$50,000. The Tai-hoey represents twenty churches and three thousand communicants.

In 1854 the Arcot Mission, India, was organized. Dr. John Scudder had already labored in Ceylon (1819-36), when he removed to Madras. He also for a time labored in Madura. He died in 1855. His seven sons went to India, as they were prepared for the work, and settled in the Arcot district, and in 1854 a Classis was organized. Dr. Jacob Chamberlain joined the mission in 1859, and two of his sons have since entered on the same field. About forty missionaries, male and female, have been employed in this mission, of whom twenty were reported as yet actively engaged in 1894. About a dozen natives have been ordained to the ministry. Various agencies are employed to forward the work, and an endowed theological seminary exists. The native communicants number about two thousand, and their benevolence in 1894 was reported at \$611.



Japan was opened to foreigners in 1858. Three offers were at once made, of \$800 each, to support missionaries on that field. Rev. Dr. S. R. Brown and Rev. Guido F. Verbeck at once responded, and others soon followed. In a few years hundreds of Japanese students flocked to America and Europe for education. In 1872 the first church was organized, which has now about six hundred members. In 1877 the Reformed and Presbyterian missions united to form the United Church of our Lord Jesus Christ in Japan. Schools and colleges and a university have been called into existence, and the success in that land has been, perhaps, unprecedented in the history of Christianity. The Reformed Church has sent more than forty missionaries, male and female, to this field, of whom about thirty are now in active service. In the present organization, the Church of Christ in Japan, consisting of Presbyterians and Reformed, there are ninety-two organized churches, with a membership of nearly ten thousand. Twenty-eight of these churches are self-supporting. The contributions from these native churches for 1894 were \$13,392 in silver. For all Protestant missions in Japan there are reported three hundred and seventy-seven churches, with a membership of forty thousand.

The Arabian Mission was started by a few individuals in 1888 upon the subscription plan. Professor J. G. Lansing, of the New Brunswick Seminary, was its founder. Three missionaries—Revs. James Cantine, Samuel W. Zwemer, and Peter J. Zwemer—are on the field. The subscription plan has proved eminently successful. The mission has never been in debt. The receipts are nearly \$6000, per year. At the last report there was a balance of more than \$4000, in the treasury. Two medical missionaries have been sent out, but both have returned.

In 1894 this mission was transferred to the care of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church, but it is to be managed upon its own subscription plan, and its funds are to be kept separate from those of other missions.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SPECIAL FEATURES AND RELATIONS.

THE Reformed Church in America has been noted for its conservatism in doctrine. It perhaps represents old-fashioned orthodoxy as well as, if not better than, any other denomination. Nevertheless it has ever been most liberal in its relations with other churches. It cheerfully recognizes all evangelical Christians as brethren in Christ. It has during the past century sent corresponding delegates or letters to no less than thirty different Synods or Assemblies. While taking repeatedly very decided action in support of the federal Union (1861-65), it was the first to send a corresponding delegate to the Presbyterian Church, South, when the war was ended. It has ever been among the foremost in organizing and supporting all the great union societies for evangelistic publication or work.

Its type of Presbyterianism has some admirable features of its own. The term of office of its elders and deacons is only for two years, although they may be reëlected; but the elder retains the honor of his office for life, and may at any time, though not in the Consistory, become a delegate to the Synods of the church. The acting Consistory may also call together all former elders and deacons, as a Great Consistory, for consultation on important matters. The members of the Consistory are also generally the trustees of the property. This prevents conflicting views between the spiritual and temporal officials of the church. The church has also an elaborate liturgy, which may be

used or not at the option of the minister. The forms for the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper are, however, obligatory. Either mode of baptism is allowed, although but one is commonly employed. In order to avoid neglecting any part of divine truth, ministers are required to explain the system of doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, so as to go over the entire system once in four years. This system, however, is not dogmatic, but experimental and practical. It presents the fact and the cause of man's misery, the method of redemption, and the gratitude which is due to God therefor. This catechism, constructed on such a basis, and emphasizing especially the comfort to be derived from all the great facts of Christianity, is one which evangelical Christians of all creeds could subscribe. There has never been any change in the standards of doctrine since the Synod of Dort (1619), yet perfect liberty of investigation is allowed and encouraged. The standards and liturgy were not fully translated for use in America until 1767, although translations, not very well known, had existed in England previously. In the same year an English psalm-book was published, with the music, the plates for the latter having been prepared in Holland. Constant improvements in the hymnology of the church have been made, so as to keep abreast of the times. In 1813 a revised edition of the Psalms was published, without music, and with the addition of one hundred and seventy-two hymns. Additional books of hymns have been added from time to time, and these have been several times combined together and reclassified. During the last twenty-five years several new entire books of hymns have been adopted, until now the hymns indorsed by the General Synod in one book or another include almost all the important evangelical hymns before the public.



The church has always prized a learned ministry. She was the first of the denominations of the land to appoint a theological professor (1784) and establish a theological seminary. She also ever cordially welcomes ministers of other denominations, many of whom are called to her pulpits. All her ministers are recognized by her constitution as bishops in the church of God. The use of the Dutch language for too long a period in her pulpits undoubtedly drove many of her children into the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches. As early as 1730 David Abeel, of New York, presented a petition with many signatures for English services in part in the church of New York, but the effort was not successful. English was not introduced in that church until a generation later (1763), which even then brought on a disastrous lawsuit. Dutch preaching lingered on in many of the rural parishes until about 1820. Then for a quarter of a century its tones were seldom heard in the pulpit; but with the recent new immigration to Michigan and other States the Dutch language has again revived, and in the two denominations existing in the West is probably now used in the pulpits of two hundred churches.

In 1696, the year in which the first church charter was secured, the churches were only 23 in number and the ministers only 9. During the next twenty-five years there was a slow natural increase of population, the churches increasing to 40 and the ministers to 13. In 1740 the ministers were 20 and the churches 65. In 1755, when the Coetus assumed the powers of a Classis, the ministers were 28 and the churches 73. At the union of the parties in 1772 the ministers were 41 and the churches 100. The Revolutionary War being mainly on the territory of the Dutch Church, the church suffered not a little, both materially and morally. At the adoption of the Constitution in 1792 there were only 40 ministers and 116 churches.

During the early years of the present century a number of churches were organized in Canada, but the War of 1812 scattered them. In 1821 there were 129 ministers and 187 churches. In 1841 there were 234 ministers and 253 churches, with about 24,000 communicants. It was not until 1845 that the number of ministers and churches was about equal—275 ministers and 274 churches. The communicants now numbered nearly 33,000. From this time there was a more steady increase. About 1846 the new immigration of Hollanders to the West began. In 1855 the churches were 364, the ministers 348, the communicants 39,000, and benevolent contributions about \$78,000. In 1865 the churches were 427, the ministers 436, the number of communicants more than 54,000, the benevolence \$225,000, and the moneys reported for congregational purposes not quite half a million. At the time of the national centennial (1876) the churches had increased to 506, the ministers to 546, the communicants to nearly 75,000; benevolence is reported at only \$210,000 (against \$282,000 of 1875), and moneys contributed for congregational purposes at nearly \$873,000. In 1894 the churches are reported at 612, the ministers 614, the communicants nearly 101,000, the benevolence \$402,000, and moneys for congregational purposes about \$1,048,000.

#### UNION OR FEDERATION.

• It is a truth to which all Christians will agree, that divisions in the church of Christ, so far as they are detrimental to the success of the kingdom of Christ in this world, must, sooner or later, be healed. The great division of the Greek and Latin Churches yet continues, notwithstanding repeated attempts at reconciliation. In 1683 an earnest attempt was made by Leibnitz, Moranus, and Spinola to

reunite the Roman and Protestant Churches, but after ten years of negotiations the effort was abandoned. Many letters passed back and forth between the continental and British Reformers to unite the Reformed churches. Professor Hermann Witsius drew up a plan for this purpose for William III., but nothing came of it. In 1743 the Classis of Amsterdam sought to bring about a union of the Dutch, the German, and the Presbyterian Churches, but without success. In 1783 Dr. Livingston expressed the desire that some genius equal to the task would arise, to draw a plan for uniting all the Reformed churches in America into one national church. Notwithstanding the seeming difficulties in the way, "I humbly apprehend," says he, "this will be practicable; and I yet hope to see it accomplished." In 1784 efforts began to be made to promote friendly correspondence between the Presbyterian, the Associate Reformed, and the Dutch Reformed Churches in America. Committees met, and articles of agreement were drawn up in 1785, and new articles in 1800. Friendly letters and visits of delegates were exchanged for several years, but this was all. In 1816 special efforts were renewed to unite the Associate Reformed and the Dutch Reformed in closer bonds, and in 1820 to unite them together under the name of the Reformed Protestant Church in North America. The standards of the two churches were adopted, and individual congregations were to be allowed their own customs and usages. Two thirds of the Classes were in favor of this union; but in 1821 the Associate Reformed Church declined to press the subject further. Delegates and letters, more or less frequently, were exchanged in subsequent years.

In 1822 new articles of correspondence were drawn up between the Presbyterian and Dutch Churches, and delegates have passed back and forth almost every year for



more than seventy years. In 1873-78 earnest efforts were made to bring about a union of the Presbyterian Churches, North and South, and of the German Reformed Church with the Dutch Church, but without success.

In reference to the Presbyterian Church, South, however, a plan of coöperation was formulated which related to publication, home missions, foreign missions, and education. It was hoped that the Reformed Church would take special interest in the evangelization of the colored people through the agencies of the Southern church. The only practical result reached, however, was coöperation on the foreign field.

Besides the effort for union with the German Reformed Church made by the Classis of Amsterdam in 1743, the Coetus party made overtures to that body for union in 1762. In 1770 Queens College was located at New Brunswick, partly for the reason that it would be more convenient for students of the German churches in Pennsylvania; and the names of two German ministers, Wyberg and Du Bois, were put among its first incorporators. At the first meeting of the Dutch General Synod, in 1794, union with the German Church was looked forward to as a desirable consummation, and a committee was appointed to take "effectual measures to bring so desirable a thing into effect." Delegates were exchanged, and German students were urged to come to New Brunswick. More distinct propositions for union were made in 1820, and again in 1842, and at the important Harrisburg convention of 1844 it was thought that the scheme was on the highroad to success; but in 1848, owing to certain doctrinal discussions in the German Church, the Dutch Church withdrew from the scheme, and correspondence was suspended for ten years (1853-63). With the tri-centennial of the Heidelberg Catechism, in 1863, intercourse was renewed, and a



general effort for union was again made in 1873, as alluded to above, but then the Dutch and Germans could not agree on the doctrinal standards. In 1886 began another effort, which was prosecuted for six years. The scheme of a federal union now seemed certain to succeed, and two thirds of the Classes of the Reformed (Dutch) Church, and most, if not all, of the Classes of the Reformed (German) Church, agreed to the plan proposed; but some technical errors in the reports of the vote of the Classes of the Dutch Church, and other reasons, prevented success. The scheme of a federation of all churches holding the Presbyterian system is now under consideration. Coöperation on mission fields is already an accomplished fact.

#### THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH.

On the 22d of October, 1822, five ministers of the Reformed (Dutch) Church seceded. This was done, as they state in their "Reasons," "on account of Hopkinsian errors of doctrine and looseness of discipline." Their names were Rev. Solomon Froeligh, Rev. Abram Brokaw, Rev. Henry V. Wyckoff, Rev. Sylvanus Palmer, and Rev. John C. Tol. Portions of their congregations went with them. All of these, except Mr. Froeligh, were under suspension at the time of the secession. In the course of the next nine years seven other Dutch ministers, and parts of their congregations, joined this secession. At first a Classis was formed, and in 1824 they organized a General Synod and formed two Classes—that of Hackensack, N. J., and that of Union, in central New York. During the first six years they gathered twenty-six churches, some of which soon became extinct and others independent. In 1859 their records showed that up to that time they had had in all twenty-four ministers and twenty-six congregations. Fourteen of

their ministers had then either died, been suspended, or left the body, and ten of their churches had become extinct or independent, so that in that year (1859) they had ten ministers and sixteen churches.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile (1835) there had occurred a separation in Holland from the state church of ministers and others who were dissatisfied with the doctrine and some features of the polity of that body, as already referred to (pp. 19, 20). Some of these Separatists came to the United States, and thus the Christian Reformed Church of Holland was transplanted to Michigan; but the great body of the Holland immigrants of 1846 and subsequent years fell into the fold of the old Dutch Church. Commissioners of that church had been sent to visit them and invite them to such union. Classes were soon organized among them, and ultimately the Particular Synod of Chicago (1856). But about 1880 some of these brethren demanded that the General Synod should denounce freemasonry and refuse church-fellowship to those belonging to oath-bound secret societies. This the Synod, after patient consideration of the subject, declined to do. In 1882, therefore, a number of these Holland ministers and churches seceded from the Reformed Church in America and joined the Christian Reformed Church. In 1889 most of the remnant of the old secession of 1822 also united with this body. The Christian Reformed Church of this country has now seven Classes and one Synod, with about one hundred churches and thirteen thousand communicants. Their standards of doctrine and polity are identical with those of the Reformed Church in America, and it would be for the benefit of both parties to come together and labor with united strength for the progress of the kingdom of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> See "Manual of Ref. Dutch Church," 1st ed., 1859, pp. 134-137.

HISTORY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH, GERMAN.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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### • THE REFORMED CHURCH IN EUROPE.

THE Reformed Church in the United States is historically derived from the Reformed Churches of Switzerland and Germany. On this ground it was in America formerly known as the German Reformed Church. It may, in fact, be regarded as the American representative of the earliest members of that group of national churches which sprang from the great religious movement in the sixteenth century of which Zwingli and Calvin were the most distinguished exponents. In Germany it received its distinctive form during the reign of Frederick III., elector of the Palatinate.

The Reformed Church is older than its name. Its founders had no thought of establishing a separate Christian denomination, and did not for a moment imagine that their work might be supposed to destroy the continuity of the ancient church. As they insisted on the preaching of the pure gospel, they preferred to be called "Evangelical Christians"; but different names were given them in various places. Finally, when a distinctive title became a necessity, some one in France called the church "Reformed," and the name was by common consent adopted. It was felt to be appropriate, for the body of Christians which bore this title claimed to be the ancient church reformed—cleansed of its medieval corruptions. At all

times it declined to be called after any particular leader, and such terms as "Zwinglian" or "Calvinist" were regarded as offensive nicknames. Indeed, some of the strictest members until a comparatively recent period objected to the use of a capital letter in writing the name of the church. It was to them "the reformed church," or "the church reformed according to God's Word." Anything more than this they regarded as savoring of sectarianism.

"The two original branches of evangelical Christendom," says Dr. Schaff, "were the Lutheran and Reformed confessions."<sup>1</sup> Though in many respects closely allied, it cannot be doubted that from the beginning these two confessions represented distinct and separate movements in the life of the church. Goebel says: "The German Reformation began simultaneously and independently at the opposite extremes of German life and culture—at the Slavonian boundary and at the foot of the Alps—and thence spread until it met at the Rhine, the center of Germanic life."<sup>2</sup>

The early history of the Reformed Church may be regarded as including three plainly marked stages, which are to be distinguished as German-Swiss, French-Swiss, and German. Their successive centers were Zurich, Geneva, and Heidelberg.

ULRICH ZWINGLI (1484-1531) shares the honor of organizing and conducting the German-Swiss Reformation with *Ecolampadius*, Leo Juda, Bullinger, and many local Reformers, but he was undoubtedly the most distinguished of them all. It was to him more than to any other single individual that the Reformed Church was indebted for its peculiar character as "the free church in the free state."

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Christian Church," vol. vii., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> "Geschichte des christlichen Lebens," vol. i., p. 275.



He called laymen to office in the church, convened the earliest Protestant synod, and encouraged local self-government. Though he was cut down in the prime of his manhood—a patriot and hero—his dying words have proved a prophecy: “What does it matter? They may kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul.”

JOHN CALVIN (1509–64) was the leading representative of the second stage of the Swiss Reformation. His influence, however, was not limited to a single nationality, and no single denomination can claim him as its founder. Though he differed from Zwingli in many particulars, it will not be denied that he continued and completed his work. Like Farel and Viretus, his predecessors at Geneva, he was aided and supported by Zurich and Berne; and in 1549 he joined with Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli, in a common confession of faith, known as the *Consensus Tigurinus*, by which the German and French elements in the Reformed Church were practically united.<sup>1</sup> In consequence of this agreement Calvin’s doctrine of the Lord’s Supper found its way into all subsequent Reformed confessions, and his views concerning church government and discipline were accepted as normal, though in monarchical countries the free development of the churches in this regard was frequently repressed. On the doctrine of predestination, however, the Germans were not generally disposed to take the advanced ground which was held by the church of Geneva.<sup>2</sup>

The third stage in the early history of the Reformed Church includes its introduction into Germany. At this period the church was chiefly concerned with the great

<sup>1</sup> In the preface to his *brochure* on this subject Calvin says: “If Zwingli and Ecolampadius were still living they would not change a single word of our *Consensus*.” (Pestalozzi, p. 391.)

<sup>2</sup> Schaff’s “History,” vol. viii., p. 211; Ebrard’s “Dogmatik,” Preface, p. viii.

sacramental controversy which had divided Protestantism during the lifetime of the earliest Reformers. It will be remembered that when Luther and Zwingli met at Marburg in 1529 it was found that the manner of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper was the only important difference between them. Luther regarded the corporal presence as a fundamental article,<sup>1</sup> and refused to give Zwingli the right hand of fellowship; but the conference was by no means an utter failure. Both parties agreed in a common confession, in which but a part of a single article was left undefined.

In later years Luther once more engaged in violent controversy with the Swiss; but Melanchthon continued to adhere closely to the terms of the Marburg agreement. He even modified the Augsburg Confession to accommodate the Reformed, and thus drew upon himself the bitter opposition of the zealots of his own church. Melanchthon's disciples were contemptuously called "Philipists," after the name of their teacher, who was familiarly known as "Master Philip." "Philipism" was declared to be as bad as Calvinism, and minor differences between Luther and Melanchthon were sought out and became the occasion of bitter controversies. The "Philipists" were in many instances deposed and banished, and Melanchthon himself fully expected to be driven out of Germany.<sup>2</sup> After his death many of his personal friends and disciples found a refuge in the Reformed Church, and their influence soon became apparent in its peculiar life.<sup>3</sup>

Melanchthon was a native of the Palatinate of the

<sup>1</sup> Schaff, vol. vi., p. 645.

<sup>2</sup> Melanchthon's letter to Bullinger, September, 1556. (Pestalozzi, p. 392.)

<sup>3</sup> Ebrard says: "We have always regarded it as truly *reformed* to be sincerely favorable to union; that is, to accept everything in other confessions that has been proved to us to be true and according to the Scriptures. Above all, we rejoice to have given to the Melanchthonianism that was elsewhere persecuted a safe refuge and the rights of citizenship."

Rhine, and it was in that province that the conflict became most intense. When Frederick III.—surnamed “the Pious”—assumed the government he had no idea of introducing the Reformed Church, being satisfied with the mild form of Lutheranism which had come to prevail under his immediate predecessors. His irenical position and supposed Calvinistic leanings were, however, peculiarly offensive to the extremists, and he was soon forced to take part in the conflict. Hitherto he had been regarded as the leader of the Melanchthonian party; but this position was found to be no longer tenable, and in 1559 he formally passed over to the Reformed Church, insisting, however, that he had not, by this act, renounced his allegiance to the Augsburg Confession.<sup>1</sup>

Hitherto the Reformed Church had in Germany been insignificant; but now that the Palatinate had identified itself with it, an official declaration of its faith became absolutely necessary. The elector therefore determined to prepare a catechism, not only to represent the faith which he had accepted, but to convey its truths to future generations. He selected two young men to engage in its composition, and the result proved the wisdom of his choice. Together they produced a work which has ever since been regarded as the crown and glory of the Reformed Church.

ZACHARIAS URSINUS (1534–83) was a native of Silesia. He studied at Wittenberg and became the favorite disciple of Melanchthon. Subsequently he visited the universities of Switzerland and France and became acquainted with Calvin and Bullinger. Exiled for his doctrinal views from his native province, he was invited by the

<sup>1</sup> “He was driven out of the Lutheran Church by the Lutherans themselves.”—DR. J. I. GOOD’S “Origin of the Reformed Church in Germany,” p. 137.



elector to assist in organizing the church of the Palatinate. He was an eminent theologian and scholar, but was personally less popular than his distinguished coadjutor.

CASPAR OLEVIANUS (1536-87) was a native of Treves. He studied at Paris, Bourges, Zurich, and Geneva, and became a faithful disciple of Calvin. Returning to his native city, he began to preach the gospel, but was arrested and cast into prison. Delivered through the potent intercession of the Elector Frederick, he went to Heidelberg, and was successively professor of theology and pastor of the principal church of the city. He was a celebrated orator and a man of great executive ability.

These were the men who produced the Heidelberg Catechism. Ursinus is supposed to have done the greater part of the work, but the hand of Olevianus may be recognized almost everywhere. The polemic questions are believed to have been inserted at the direct command of the elector. In the composition of the work materials taken from the catechisms of Calvin and À Lasco were freely used, and there are traces of Melanchthonian influence; but its originality as a whole has never been questioned. "The Heidelberg Catechism," says Max Goebel, "may be regarded as the flower and fruit of the entire German and French Reformation; it has Lutheran sincerity, Melanchthonian clearness, Zwinglian simplicity, and Calvinistic fire, all harmoniously blended; and it has, therefore, become and remained the common confession of the German Reformed Church from the Palatinate to the Netherlands, including Brandenburg and Prussia."

The Elector Frederick is one of the noblest characters in the history of the sixteenth century. His defense of the catechism before the diet of Augsburg, in 1566, was positively heroic, and his sincerity was not questioned by his bitterest opponents. At first he stood almost alone



among the princes of Germany, but his example did not remain without effect. During his lifetime Reformed churches were founded by his influence along the Lower Rhine, and a few years after his death a number of German states and cities accepted the Reformed faith.<sup>1</sup>

The Reformed Church of Germany and Switzerland also gained strength from minor sources which must not be disregarded. Among these the following are the most important:

The Waldenses, a body of Christians of medieval origin, sympathized with the Reformation from the beginning, and at a synod held at Angrogna, in 1532, resolved to connect themselves with the Reformed Church; but this action was opposed by an influential minority, who kept up the ancient organization, which has been maintained to the present day. In the Palatinate the Waldenses had been numerous, but they were absorbed by the Protestants during the Reformation.<sup>2</sup>

The Hussites of Poland were also, in 1627, "grafted upon the Reformed Church, and in the next decade grew to be one with it."<sup>3</sup>

Holland at this period exerted an important influence on the Reformed churches of Germany. As early as 1562 the Elector Frederick welcomed fugitives from the Netherlands, and by his advice many of them settled in

<sup>1</sup> Among the most important of the German cities and principalities which passed over from the Lutheran to the Reformed Church after the Palatinate had led the way we may mention Nassau (1578), Bremen (1581), Hanau (1596), Anhalt (1597), Baden-Durlach (1599), Lippe (1600), and part of Hesse (1604). The elector of Brandenburg, from whom the present imperial family of Germany is descended, accepted the Reformed faith in 1613. Most of his people, however, remained Lutheran, and their ruler was the first among German princes to proclaim the religious freedom of all his subjects. (Cuno's "*Gedächtnissbuch*."

<sup>2</sup> Goebel, vol. i., p. 35, note.

<sup>3</sup> See De Schweinitz's "*Moravian Manual*"; also "*History of the Unitas Fratrum*," p. 633.

Frankenthal, which, through their industry and enterprise, became a place of considerable importance. In this town two congregations were founded in their interest—Dutch and French—and soon afterward similar churches were established in Heidelberg, Worms, and other cities and villages.<sup>1</sup> In the days of the persecution under the Duke of Alva these churches increased in membership, and, as they consisted exclusively of people who had been exiled for their faith, were naturally regarded with great respect. They were granted more freedom than had been accorded to the German churches, and were soon organized as Classes and Synods, after the Dutch pattern. In the course of time most of the Netherlands returned to their own country; but they had permanently impressed their ideas of order and discipline on the Reformed churches of Germany.

The Huguenot element in the church of the Palatinate was also considerable. After the massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572, the Elector Frederick III. sent a military force, under the command of his favorite son, John Casimir, to aid the Protestants, and his country was soon crowded with French refugees. Some of these connected themselves with the "Walloon" churches which had already been established, but others were soon Germanized. It was not, however, until a century later, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), that the most important migration of Huguenots to Germany occurred. Twelve days after the revocation the great elector of Brandenburg, who regarded himself as the representative head of the Reformed Church, issued the Edict of Potsdam, by which he bade the exiles welcome to his state.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Pfälzisches Memorabile," vol. xiv., p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Koch's "Aufhebung des Edicts von Nantes," p. 10; Zahn's "Einfluss der Ref. Kirche auf Preussens Grösse," p. 9.

Several German princes and free cities, followed his example, and many Huguenot settlements were founded. That these "colonies" contributed greatly to the prosperity of Germany has not been denied; and we do not hesitate to say that their presence in the Reformed Church not only contributed to its advancement in culture and intelligence, but was the source of much of the energy and enterprise which it exhibited at this period of its history.

Some one has compared the Reformed Church in its early history with the river Rhine, on whose banks so many of its members have dwelt. Like that mighty river, the Reformed Church has its source in the mountains of Switzerland, and derives its tributaries from France and Germany, while it flows onward to refresh the plains of Holland.

The history of the electoral Palatinate after it had accepted the Reformed faith was peculiarly eventful. Frederick III. was succeeded in 1576 by his son Louis, who was a high Lutheran and did his best to undo his father's work. After his brief reign of seven years his brother, John Casimir, once more established the Reformed Church, though certain districts remained Lutheran. During the Thirty Years' War there were frequent changes; but for the greater part of the period the province was controlled by Roman Catholic Spaniards or Bavarians. At the close of the struggle the Reformed Church was once more established by law; and though it had suffered greatly it still remained the leading religious organization along the whole course of the Rhine from its source to the ocean.<sup>1</sup>

That in the Palatinate the Lutheran and Reformed Churches approached each other more closely than elsewhere will hardly be denied. Christians had grown weary of controversy, and minor peculiarities gradually disap-

<sup>1</sup> Goebel, vol. i., p. 362.



peared. The Reformed people were sincerely attached to the Heidelberg Catechism, and, though they had many local confessions, regarded it as a sufficient bond of union. Their system of faith was, therefore, thoroughly Christological, giving "the best expression to Calvin's views on the Lord's Supper, but wisely omitting all reference to an eternal decree of reprobation and preterition."<sup>1</sup> They regarded the distinctively Dutch confessions—the Belgic Confession and the decrees of the Synod of Dordrecht—with profound respect; they were not Arminians, though they preferred to say, with Bullinger, that "Christ is the object and contents of divine predestination." To them the sacramental questions, which had in Germany received special attention, remained peculiarly interesting; and in course of time it was found that the distinctions between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches were not as radical as had been originally supposed, so that the two confessions lived very comfortably together.

The liturgical services of the Reformed churches were conducted according to the Palatinate Liturgy, which, like the catechism, had been published in 1563. For nearly a century they were distinguished by singing psalms exclusively, but in 1657 began to sing hymns, and the organs which had so long been silent were again employed in worship. About the same time there began to appear in the Reformed Church a series of sacred poets<sup>2</sup> whose compositions were accepted by both confessions. In this way hymnology prepared the way for fraternal unity.

Even more important was the influence exerted by the great religious movement which is known as "Pietism." Though it frequently degenerated into fanaticism, it also

<sup>1</sup> Schaff's "History," vol. vii., p. 811.

<sup>2</sup> Louisa Henrietta of Brandenburg, Joachim Neander, Gerhard Terstegen, and many others.



included multitudes of quiet, unpretentious Christians who remained faithful to their ancient confessions while they earnestly sought to apply the precepts of the gospel to their daily lives. This movement may be held to have begun in the Reformed Church in the person of Jean de Labadie (1610-74), but found a more worthy exponent in Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705). The latter was a Lutheran, but his influence in the Reformed Church was fully as great as in his own. It is principally to him that both churches owe the reëstablishment of catechisation and confirmation, which had been generally neglected. Though bitterly persecuted in his day, posterity has accorded him one of the noblest places in the history of the church.

Spener had, of course, many coadjutors, of whom, in the Reformed Church, Theodore Untereyck was perhaps the most prominent. Under the influence of such men ancient prejudices were gradually removed and the subjective side of Christianity was duly recognized. In a general way Pietism harmonized with the biblical theology of Cocceius, which had come to prevail in Germany, as represented by Burmann, Witsius, Lampe, Vitringa, and others, from whom, directly or indirectly, many of the early ministers of the Reformed Church in the United States derived their theological instruction.

The influence of Pietism in both evangelical confessions brought them closer together, and thus prepared the way for the most important event in their later history. In 1817 the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of Prussia were by action of the government consolidated into a single body, to be known as the Evangelical Church. There was to be no confessional change—individuals were to remain Lutheran or Reformed, as they had been before—but in its official relations the church of Prussia was to be

regarded as a single organization, and congregations which declined to enter the union were deprived of government patronage. This "Church Union" gradually extended over Germany and now includes nearly all the churches which were originally Reformed. A much larger proportion of Lutherans has declined to enter the union, which may be said to have in some places revived confessional distinctions, while in others it has almost obliterated them. In the union the Reformed Church, though greatly in the minority, has exerted an important influence, and it has been observed that a large proportion of recent eminent theologians has belonged to the Reformed element.<sup>1</sup> There is a *Reformirter Bund*, consisting of ministers who are decidedly attached to the Reformed confession.

On the continent of Europe the Reformed Church is established by law in Switzerland and Holland. It is well organized in France and Austria-Hungary, and has scattered congregations in other countries. National boundaries are not supposed to divide the church, and the Reformed Church is in Europe still regarded as practically one.

The earliest emigration from Germany to America occurred at a time of deep depression, when the condition of the Reformed Church was well represented by its chosen emblems, the burning bush and the lily among thorns. It was during this period that the Classis of Bentheim, in northern Germany, adopted a seal, which is still in use, bearing as its device a ship tossed by the waves, with the inscription: *Domine, salva nos, perimus*. To these times we must go back if we would comprehend the beginnings of the Reformed Church in the United States.

<sup>1</sup> According to a decision of the imperial courts, the kings of Prussia are still to be regarded as members of the Reformed Church, inasmuch as the union of churches involved no confessional change. (Cuno's "*Gedächtnissbuch*," vol. i., p. 82.)

# THE REFORMED CHURCH, GERMAN.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE GREAT MIGRATION.

THOUGH the German branch of the Reformed Church may justly claim to be one of the oldest Protestant churches, its establishment in this country is considerably more recent than that of the church of Holland. Its American history can hardly be traced beyond the great migration of German-speaking people which began in the closing decade of the seventeenth century and continued in increasing volume almost down to the time of the Revolution.

That there were Germans in America at an earlier period is well known, and it may perhaps be taken for granted that some of these pioneers held to the Reformed confession. Among the Dutch settlers of New Netherland there were from the beginning isolated Germans; and we may perhaps be permitted to refer to the fact that Governor Peter Minuit, who after his withdrawal from the Dutch service became the leader of the Swedish colony which in 1638<sup>1</sup> settled on the western shore of Delaware

<sup>1</sup> The colony set sail in August, 1637, but did not reach the Delaware until April, 1638. (Acrelius, p. 23.)

Bay, was a native of the German city of Wesel, and had been a deacon in one of the Reformed churches of his native city.<sup>1</sup>

That Minuit deserves to be commemorated in American history will hardly be doubted. It was he who purchased from the Indians all the land between Cape Henlopen and the Falls of Trenton, and inaugurated the policy of fair dealing with the natives which was continued and developed by William Penn.<sup>2</sup>

The connection of Governor Minuit with the colony of New Sweden was brief,<sup>3</sup> and his influence in religious matters can hardly have been great. The Swedish colony which he founded was, of course, Lutheran, but Hollanders and Germans had settled along the Delaware before that region came under the dominion of the crown of England. A Dutch Reformed church was founded at New Castle in 1642,<sup>4</sup> and this church was still in existence at the arrival of William Penn.<sup>5</sup>

There is no claim of historic continuity between these isolated pioneers and the German churches of the succeeding century. The German immigration to America was really inaugurated by Francis Daniel Pastorius<sup>6</sup> and his little company of mystics, who came to Pennsylvania in 1683, at the invitation of William Penn, and founded Germantown.

<sup>1</sup> See Kapp's "History of Immigration" and Broadhead's "History of New York." In the original Swedish MSS. translated by the late Joseph Micky, of Philadelphia, it is also stated that Minuit was a deacon of the Reformed church of Wesel.

<sup>2</sup> Acrelius, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> On the return voyage he visited the West Indian island of St. Christopher to obtain a cargo, and there lost his life in a hurricane.

<sup>4</sup> Corwin's "Manual," 3d ed., p. 612.

<sup>5</sup> Proud's "History of Pennsylvania," vol. i., p. 261.

<sup>6</sup> Francis Daniel Pastorius (1651-1719) was a man of learning and a voluminous writer. In 1688 he drew up a memorial against slave-holding, which is regarded as the earliest American protest against slavery. It is the subject of Whittier's charming poem, "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim."



William Penn had twice visited Germany and was familiar with the condition of its people. He was especially impressed by the unfortunate state of the Mennonites and other minor sects, which were in some places very unjustly treated by the government. That he was well acquainted with the Reformed Church is sufficiently plain, for his mother—Margaret Jasper—was the daughter of a Rotterdam merchant and had been brought up in the Reformed Church, and he had himself been the pupil of the celebrated Reformed divine, Moses Amyrault. In the Palatinate he made many friends, and was on terms of intimate acquaintance with the leaders of the Pietists; but it is certain that he was not favorable to churches "as by law established." His sympathy was especially attracted to the unfortunate condition of the separatists, in whose behalf he had vainly appealed to the civil authorities. While, therefore, it does not appear that the settlement of "church people" in Pennsylvania was in any way discouraged, the earliest invitation was not addressed to them; and for some years the greater number of the Reformed and Lutherans avoided that province, because they regarded it as in a special sense the land of the sects.

For twenty-five years German immigration to America remained a tiny rivulet, but then it suddenly grew into a mighty flood. So great was the number of emigrants that it seemed for a time as if the Rhine country would be depopulated. For extent and comprehensiveness no such popular movement had taken place in Germany since the migration of nations that characterized the beginning of the middle age.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The number of German immigrants to Pennsylvania before the Revolution has been variously estimated. Theodor Poesche, a careful statistician, estimates the whole number at 158,600; but a writer in the "*Deutsche Pionier*" (vol. xiv., p. 253) suggests that 200,000 would be more nearly correct. Dr. Seidensticker supposes that at the middle of the last century the German

The causes which led so many thousands to leave their fatherland were necessarily various, but in a general way they were closely connected with the prevailing misery of Germany. Of the extent of this misery it is difficult at present to form a proper conception. It embraced all the relations of life—civil, social, and religious; so that, in the language of a writer of the period, "it seemed as if hope had left the earth forever."

For nearly a century Germany had been the battleground of Europe. The Thirty Years' War had, indeed, been nominally concluded by the Treaty of Westphalia, in 1648; but the formal declaration of peace had brought no real tranquillity. This celebrated treaty is said to have secured religious freedom to Protestants; but it must be remembered that this freedom, such as it was, would never have been granted if it had not been expected—in accordance with the policy of Richelieu and Mazarin—to promote dissension and thus to aid in the final dismemberment of Germany. The "three confessions"—Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed—were formally recognized, but there was a great difference in the positions which they were severally made to occupy. The patronage of the imperial government was exclusively given to the Roman Catholics, to whom in many villages which were prevailingly Protestant was granted possession of the churches. Some of the princes made their peace with Rome, and the servile company of their flatterers were

population of Pennsylvania alone was from seventy to eighty thousand. The late Professor I. D. Rupp published a volume containing the names of upward of 30,000 Germans who landed at the port of Philadelphia, but these constituted only a part of the entire number. After the Revolution the German immigration was for many years comparatively small, and it was not until about 1840 that another popular movement began which brought hundreds of thousands of immigrants to this country, and which may be said to continue to the present day. Of course the Reformed Church has derived important elements from recent immigration, but it is with the earlier movement that we are at present especially concerned.

only too ready to follow their example. "The government," says Löher, "cared nothing for the people, and almost everywhere the party which happened to be in power oppressed dissenters. This state of things was worst in the Palatinate, where the electors changed their religion three times in as many reigns. The whole country was expected to follow the example of its rulers, and whoever was unwilling to submit could do no better than to take up his pilgrim's staff and leave his native land."

Louis XIV. of France, in 1657, spent vast sums in an attempt to bribe the electors to choose him emperor of Germany; and when he finally failed in his purpose his rage and desire of revenge knew no bounds. In the name of his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Charlotte of Orleans, who had been a Palatine princess, he violently laid claim to her hereditary estates, and again and again sent his armies to ravage the banks of the Rhine. The raids of Turenne, in 1674 and 1675, were sufficiently destructive; but for merciless atrocity the invasion of the Palatinate in 1688-89 is almost unexampled in history. In one year Worms, Mainz, Speyer, Mannheim, Heidelberg, and many other cities and villages were either burned or utterly devastated. The castle of Heidelberg, the chief residence of the electors of the Palatinate, was ruined, and its remains still stand as a memorial of that awful time. General Melac, it is said, cut down all the vines on the hillsides near Heidelberg, thus depriving the people of their sole means of subsistence; and thousands were driven from their homes in the dead of winter. Many of these found a refuge in Switzerland and Holland, but multitudes died of starvation.

Not the Palatinate alone, but all the surrounding countries, suffered intensely during this dreadful period. "War," said Turenne, "is a terrible monster, which must needs be



fed;" and all the Rhine provinces, with Alsace, Upper Hesse, Baden-Durlach, and Württemberg, were swept by constant raids. Switzerland was overcrowded with Huguenots and Palatines, so that the poverty of the people became extreme. Trade had found new channels, and the ships of Hamburg and Bremen lay rotting at their wharves. The Peace of Ryswick, in 1697, brought an interval of peace, but it continued only until the breaking out of the War of the Spanish Succession, in 1701. Indeed, it is doubtful if the condition of the people was more tolerable during this brief interval than it had been before; for the soldiers who robbed the land had at least been prodigal with their booty, and in this way some fragments had found their way back to their rightful owners; but now even this uncertain means of subsistence was taken away, and the sufferings of the people were greatly increased. The defeat of the French by Marlborough and Prince Eugene, at Blenheim, in 1704, may be said to have concluded the period of invasions, but the misery of the fatherland was not diminished. For several years the harvests failed, and the winter of 1708-09 was the severest that had ever been known. "It was so cold," says Löher, "that the birds froze in the air and the wild beasts in the forest."<sup>1</sup> "Then," says an early writer, "men looked into each others' faces and said, 'Let us go to America, and if we perish we perish.'"

In the spring of 1709 a great multitude of people hastened down the Rhine, hardly knowing whither they went. It had been reported that Queen Anne of England had been touched with sympathy for the suffering Palatines, and had kindly invited them to seek a home in her American colonies. If this invitation was actually extended the good queen must certainly have been surprised at the num-

<sup>1</sup> "Geschichte der Deutschen in Amerika," p. 42.



ber of people who accepted it. More than thirty thousand Palatines, who had found their way to England, encamped near London, clamoring for transportation to the colonies. A few ship-loads of emigrants might have been welcome, but now it seemed as if a whole nation were coming. English laborers were jealous of the intruders, and the ominous cry of "No popery" was raised, so that the government deemed it prudent to send the Roman Catholics back to Germany. Attempts were made to find places for some of the Palatines, and the Duke of Sussex settled several hundred of them on his estates. Between three and four thousand were placed on certain unoccupied lands in the county of Limerick, in Ireland,<sup>1</sup> and a settlement was also attempted on the Scilly Islands. Gradually a large number of Palatines were transported to America, and these were scattered in little companies through most of the British colonies. The settlements undertaken in the South did not generally prove successful: at Biloxi they died of yellow fever; in North Carolina they were massacred by the Tuscarora Indians. In the North they settled in large numbers in the province of New York, where they were expected to level the pine forests and to provide tar for the use of the British navy. Pennsylvania received a smaller number, but in that province the liberality of the government promoted the prosperity of the settlers. It was not long before the stream of immigration was attracted to Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania became in a special sense the German colony.

Though at first the larger number of immigrants came from the Palatinate, the name *Palatine*, as applied to all of them, soon became a misnomer. The Swiss element was

<sup>1</sup> Among the descendants of these Irish Palatines John Wesley made some of his earliest converts, and Embury and Barbara Heck were of Palatine descent.

large, and east of the Schuylkill River was probably predominant. In fact, every province in the Rhine country furnished its contingent to the great migration, though the number that came from other parts of Germany was very small. As the Reformed Church was the leading ecclesiastical organization along the whole course of the Rhine, it is plain why the greater number of the early immigrants were attached to the Reformed confession. In a report presented to the Synod of South Holland, convened at Breda in 1730, it is stated that at that time "the Reformed constituted more than half of the whole number [of Germans in Pennsylvania], being about fifteen thousand." As the great migration extended to other parts of Germany the Lutherans in America rapidly increased in numbers, and long before the end of the century they had become the larger body.

That the pioneers were poor is sufficiently plain, though few of them, perhaps, were as poor as the settlers at Schoharie, N. Y., of whom Rupp relates that nine of them clubbed together to buy an old horse to be used successively by all of them for agricultural purposes. A few had brought with them the means to purchase land; but the best land was covered by the heaviest timber, and it took many blows to fell the monarchs of the forest. Others were in actual want, especially after the inauguration of the iniquitous system, even then called a "traffic in souls," by which poor people were persuaded to sail to America without paying their passage, and without fully understanding that they were to be sold as redemptioners. They were, however, frugal and laborious, and before many years they rejoiced in the providence that had brought them to America.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FOUNDERS.

TO determine the exact date of the founding of our earliest churches is a very difficult task. For some years the records were very imperfectly kept, and in some instances the names of the founders are forgotten. Devout people met here and there for religious service; but they had no regular pastors, and there was no one to tell them how interesting a record of their work would prove to their descendants.

The German pioneers of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, as soon as they had established a settlement, invariably set apart a good farm for the use of the church and the parochial school. This farm was occupied by the schoolmaster, who also became the precentor, and at a later period the organist, of the congregation. Sometimes a glebe was also set apart for the minister; but this generally occurred at a later date, and was even then exceptional, for the early pastors served many congregations, and but one of them could claim the honor of being the pastor's "home church." The church was usually built near the school-house, for in the minds of the founders church and school were inseparably connected.

The early German settlers have frequently been represented as rude and illiterate. That they lacked social polish is readily conceded; but it must not be forgotten that every German regarded it as a religious duty to teach his children to read the Bible and the catechism, so that they

might be properly prepared for confirmation and the holy communion. According to the records preserved in the State Department at Harrisburg, Pa., nearly every immigrant was at least able to write his name. That they were fond of reading is evident from the large number of books published in the last century by Christopher Saur and other German publishers,<sup>1</sup> as well as from the still larger number which are known to have been imported from the fatherland. Though not themselves learned, they had a traditional reverence for learning, and, with the exception of certain minor sects, were earnestly desirous that their pastors should be educated men. The darkest period was certainly not the earliest.

The schoolmaster was in those days a very important personage. He was ordinarily the most intelligent man in the community, and in a fully organized congregation was regarded as the pastor's chief assistant. He not only taught the children to read and write, and to sing the chorals which their fathers loved so well, but he was also expected in due time to instruct them in the catechism. At funerals he was required to lead in singing, and when no minister was present it was the most natural thing in the world for him to read the burial service and to speak a few words of consolation. In this way schoolmasters were in some instances trained to be effective public speakers.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The First Century of German Printing in America," Philadelphia, 1893.

<sup>2</sup> The following document, of which the original is in possession of the writer, is interesting as enumerating the ordinary duties of the parochial teacher during the colonial period:

" MEMORANDUM.

"On this 4th day of May, 1747, I, the undersigned, John Hoffman, parochial teacher of the church at Lancaster, have promised, in the presence of the congregation, to serve as chorister, and, as long as we have no pastor, to read sermons on Sunday. In summer I promise to hold catechetical instruction with the young, as becomes a faithful teacher, and to lead them in sing-



Unfortunately there was a great lack of competent teachers. The ground of the deficiency was, however, less frequently literary than moral. It often happened that the candidates had been teachers in the fatherland, but had been dismissed for immorality. Such persons might deceive the people on their first appearance, but their true character soon became apparent. Others had been soldiers, and with their high temper and harsh manners became the terror not only of their school, but of the neighborhood. It is always easier to elect an officer than to remove him, and it sometimes happened that such men occupied their positions for years, to the great scandal of the church and the community.

Freely acknowledging these deficiencies, we recognize the great value of the system of parochial schools as it prevailed at this early period. Indeed, it is difficult to see how without them the Reformed Church could have been established in this country. Pastors, though earnestly longed for, were slow in coming; and if it had not been

ing; and also to attend to the clock. On the other hand, the congregation promises me an annual salary, consisting of voluntary offerings from all the members of the church, to be written in a special register and arranged according to the amount contributed, so that the teacher may be adequately compensated for his labor.

"Furthermore, I have firmly and irrevocably agreed with the congregation on the aforesaid date that I will keep school on every working-day during the entire year, as is the usual custom, and in such manner as becomes a faithful teacher. In consideration whereof they promise me a free dwelling and four cords of wood, and have granted me the privilege of charging for each child that may come to school the sum of five shillings (I say 5 sh.) for three months, and for the whole year one pound (I write £1). I promise to enter upon my duties, if alive and well, on the 24th of November, 1747.

"In testimony whereof I have written the above document and signed the same with my own signature, to remain unchanged for one year from date. Sealed with my usual signet.

"JOHN HOFFMAN, *Teacher.*

"Signed in presence of the undersigned witnesses:

"MICHAEL FORDINEH,  
JOHANNES DIEMER,  
JOHN GEORGE ESCHELMAN."

for the imperfect ministrations of the better class of parochial teachers—most of whose names are now forgotten—the greater number of the earliest churches could hardly have been founded.

In several instances, it is true, the settlers were accompanied by their pastors. John Frederick Hager, a *candidatus theologiæ*, accompanied a body of 2138 Palatines—who in May, 1709, arrived in New York—on their way to America.<sup>1</sup> The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel manifested its interest in the spiritual welfare of the Germans by ordaining him for service “among the Palatines, New York,” on the 20th of December, 1709.<sup>2</sup> He preached to the Reformed people at East and West Camp, as Joshua von Kocherthal did for the Lutherans.<sup>3</sup> His death occurred not later than 1723,<sup>4</sup> and, though little is known of his labors, he may be regarded as the founder of the oldest German Reformed churches in the valleys of the Hudson and the Mohawk. His successor in that field was John Jacob Oehl, who lived to a great age and appears to have continued in the ministry until the time of the Revolution.

The pioneer of the Reformed ministry in the South was Henry Hoeger, “a very sober, honest man,” who accompanied Baron De Graffenried’s Swiss colony, which, in 1710, founded New Berne, N. C. After the massacre by the Tuscarora Indians, in 1711, Hoeger and about fifty of the survivors removed to Virginia.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Historic Manual,” p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> London “Notes and Queries,” March, 1884.

<sup>3</sup> He officiated at the marriage of Conrad Weiser, the celebrated Indian interpreter, November 22, 1720. (Harbaugh’s “Lives,” vol. ii., p. 373.)

<sup>4</sup> Dr. B. M. Schmucker, in the “Lutheran and Missionary,” 1887.

<sup>5</sup> Hoeger served a Reformed congregation at Germantown, Va., and the ruins of his old church were known until recently. One of his descendants is the Hon. James Lawson Kemper, who served as governor of Virginia. (“Ref. Church Record,” June 28, 1888.)

The earliest ordained German minister of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania appears to have been the Rev. Samuel Guldin, who lived in Oley, Berks County. He had been one of the pastors of the cathedral church of Berne, Switzerland, but was evicted from his charge on the ground of Pietism. In 1718 he published two small volumes, giving an account of his trial and condemnation, and soon afterward emigrated to Pennsylvania, where we find him settled with his family in 1722. According to the family tradition, he preached frequently and acceptably, but never assumed a pastoral charge. In his old age he published a little book<sup>1</sup> in which he declared himself firmly attached to the confessions of the Reformed Church. He died December 31, 1745, aged eighty-one years.<sup>2</sup>

That Guldin continued to sympathize with the Pietists is evident from his latest publication. He was, however, not a fanatic, and his descendants were among the founders of the Reformed church of Oley.<sup>3</sup> That he had been harshly treated in the fatherland is sufficiently plain, and if he lacked the enthusiasm essential to the organization of church work in a new country the fact is at least intelligible. It was, however, as we shall see, not a learned scholar nor a distinguished orator, but a humble school-master, that was called to this important undertaking.

It is said that a German Reformed church was built at Germantown, Pa., in 1719, and that the Swedish pastor, Dylander, laid the corner-stone.<sup>4</sup> The fact that a minis-

<sup>1</sup> "Unpartheyisches Zeugniß," Germantown, C. Saur, 1743.

<sup>2</sup> For an extended account of this remarkable man, see an article by the author, entitled "Samuel Guldin, Pietist and Pioneer," in the "Reformed Quarterly Review" for July, 1892.

<sup>3</sup> The late John C. Guldin, D.D., of New York, an eminent minister, successively connected with the German and Dutch churches, was descended from Samuel Guldin in the fifth generation.

<sup>4</sup> "Halle Reports," Reading ed., p. 62.



ter of another denomination was invited to perform this service renders it probable that there was no settled pastor. The schoolmaster, or some pious layman, conducted religious service as best he could, and the people submitted to an arrangement which they felt to be disorderly, in the hope of soon receiving an ordained minister from the fatherland. Whoever at this time served the church at Germantown, it must have enjoyed some external prosperity, for after 1725 it had a bell on its place of worship.<sup>1</sup>

The earliest Reformed congregation in Pennsylvania, it can hardly be doubted, was founded by an isolated settlement of Hollanders in the southern part of Bucks County, in the region which in colonial times was known as Neshaminy or "Shameny." There were two preaching-stations, which together constituted a congregation whose official title in the records is "Bensalem and Sammeny." This congregation was organized May 10, 1710, by the Rev. Paulus van Vlecq, who had been irregularly ordained as chaplain of the Dutch troops proceeding to Canada.<sup>2</sup> The Bensalem section was in 1719 reorganized as a Presbyterian church,<sup>3</sup> but Neshaminy remained Reformed, and subsequently exerted an important influence in the organization of the German churches.<sup>4</sup>

Soon after the organization of the church at Neshaminy, Pastor Van Vlecq visited certain outlying settlements of Hollanders and *Plattdeutsch*, a little farther to the west, in what is now Montgomery County. At Skippack, on the 29th of May, 1710, he baptized ten children. On the 4th of June he ordained elders and deacons at White

<sup>1</sup> "Halle Reports," p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Corwin's "Manual," p. 526.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of the Rev. Samuel Streng, March 23, 1894.

<sup>4</sup> This church is at Churchville, Bucks County. During the greater part of the colonial period it was ecclesiastically connected with the German churches, but at present it belongs to the Reformed Church in America.



Marsh. The names of the people to whom he ministered are preserved in his "Journal"; and any one who is at all familiar with the Skippack region will recognize such names as De Wees, De Haven, Hendricks, Op de Graef, Umstead, and Pannebacker. Though there is no proof that a permanent organization was effected,<sup>1</sup> there can be no doubt that we have here the beginnings of the religious movement which resulted in the organization of the churches at Skippack and White Marsh.<sup>2</sup>

About ten years later these churches and the church at Falckner's Swamp were founded as German congregations.<sup>3</sup> Germans had settled in large numbers and that region had become pretty thoroughly Germanized. The organization of these churches was chiefly due to the labors of a man who had not been regularly inducted into the pastoral office, but who for energy and self-sacrificing devotion deserves to be ranked as the foremost of the pioneers.

JOHN PHILIP BOEHM had come to America not later than 1720, bearing with him testimonials that he had been for about seven years a faithful parochial schoolteacher and precentor in the Reformed church of the city of Worms, and that he was driven thence by the Roman Catholics for holding the Reformed faith.<sup>4</sup>

It is not known whether Boehm ever taught school in this country, but it is certain that he soon became a leader in the community and that he was universally recognized as a man of eminent piety. Soon after his arrival in this

<sup>1</sup> Van Vlecq left Neshaminy in 1713, and the church was without a pastor until 1719.

<sup>2</sup> Dotterer's "Skippack Reformed Church."

<sup>3</sup> Falckner's Swamp, in New Hanover Township, Montgomery County, is one of the oldest German settlements in Pennsylvania. The Lutheran church of this place was long supposed to be the oldest German church in America; but this view can no longer be maintained, in consequence of recently discovered documents. (Jacobs's "History of the Ev. Luth. Church," p. III.)

<sup>4</sup> Dotterer's "John Philip Boehm," p. 1.

country he was induced to conduct religious meetings, at which he read sermons from an approved European collection.

Before 1725 congregations had been informally established at Falckner's Swamp, Skippack, and White Marsh. These congregations were vacant, and, seeing no prospect of securing an ordained minister, they unanimously requested Boehm to assume the pastoral office. According to his own statement, he hesitated long before acceding to their wishes, explaining to the people that such a course would be contrary to the order of the Reformed Church. They replied that he could not justify himself in the sight of God for refusing to undertake a work of such great importance. Henry Antes, the most prominent member of the Falckner's Swamp church, he says, pleaded with him with tears to accept a call which was so manifestly providential. Before the close of the year 1725 Boehm yielded to these solicitations, and from this time to the end of his life he continued in the pastoral office. His remuneration consisted of such voluntary offerings as the people felt able to give.

For two or three years Boehm labored faithfully, baptizing several hundred children and preaching at many outlying places in the spirit of a true evangelist. Then, however, trouble came, and for a while it was a serious question whether he ought to continue his pastoral work.

On the 21st of September, 1727, George Michael Weiss, an ordained minister, arrived from Germany. He had been sent to this country by "the upper Consistory, or Classis, of the Palatinate," and his regular standing in the church could not be doubted. Some of the members of the Skippack church now insisted that the time had come for Boehm to withdraw from the pastorate, to make room for Weiss, who had been regularly ordained.

Weiss immediately organized a church in Philadelphia,<sup>1</sup> and soon afterward began to preach also at Skippack. Boehm and his friends appreciated the irregularity of their position, and sought the advice of the Reformed (Dutch) ministers of New York, who recommended that the whole matter should be referred to the Classis of Amsterdam.<sup>2</sup> In this event we have the practical beginning of the intimate relations of the German Reformed churches of Pennsylvania with the Church of Holland which continued for so many years.

In their letter to Holland the Pennsylvania commissioners explained at length the circumstances under which Boehm had been called to the pastorate, at the same time expressing the fear that if he should withdraw from the ministry their condition might be even more deplorable than it had been before he began his work. In their reply, dated June 29, 1729, the church in Holland declared that "under the circumstances all the transactions of the said Boehm—his teachings, even his administration of baptism and of the Lord's Supper—must be deemed lawful"; but that "to supply what has hitherto been lacking, he must be ordained to the ministry according to ecclesiastical usage." Boehm was accordingly ordained in New York, on the 23d of November, 1729, by the Rev. Henricus Boel and the Rev. Gualterius du Bois. Weiss was present at the ordination of Boehm, and on the next day the two ministers were formally reconciled. Boehm was to remain pastor of the Falckner's Swamp, Skippack, and White Marsh churches, and Weiss was directed to take charge of

<sup>1</sup> The elders elected in 1727 by the church in Philadelphia were Peter Lecolie, John William Roerig, Heinrich Weller, and George Peter Hillengass. (Reiff's "Petition in Chancery.")

<sup>2</sup> The correspondence has been preserved among the records of the Collegiate church of New York, and was translated and published in the "Mercersburg Review" for October, 1876, by the Rev. Dr. T. W. Chambers, of New York.



Philadelphia and Germantown. From this time forth these worthy pioneers labored in perfect harmony.

Boehm did not long remain pastor of the church at Skippack, though he served the rest of his charge for many years. Two years later we find this church uniting with a number of congregations which had organized farther north and west in calling a pastor who had arrived from the fatherland.

John Henry Goetschius (or Goetschy) was a native of the canton of Zurich, in Switzerland. In the substantial books of record which he procured for his congregations he styles himself "Helvetico-Tigurinus," adding to his signature a few devout sentences in Greek and Latin.<sup>1</sup> On the title-page of the "church book" of New Goshenhoppen he enumerates his congregations, in 1731, as follows: Skippack, Old Goshenhoppen, New Goshenhoppen, Swamp, Saucon, Egypt, Macedonia, Misillem, Oley, Bern, and Tulpehocken. These congregations were scattered over a district now included in the counties of Montgomery, Northampton, Lehigh, Berks, and Lebanon. It was an immense diocese, and a visit to the remote churches must have involved hardships of which we can hardly form a proper conception.

Goetschius came to this country—apparently in 1728—as a *candidatus theologiæ*, with authority to administer the sacraments.<sup>2</sup> In 1737 he was regularly ordained by the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia. Soon after this event he withdrew from his field in Pennsylvania, and his subsequent history cannot be certainly traced.

Several other ministers named Goetschius are mentioned in the early history of the Reformed churches of this

<sup>1</sup> Goetschius kept his record of baptisms in Latin, and it is an interesting fact that in several congregations which he founded the record was until recently continued in the same language.

<sup>2</sup> Harbaugh, vol. i., p. 293.



country. "In 1734," says Löher, "four hundred Swiss, natives of the canton of Zurich, were on their way to Carolina under the leadership of their pastor, Goetschy of Saletz; but most of them failed to reach their destination."<sup>1</sup> According to the manuscript "Züricher Geschlechtsbuch," Pastor Moritz Goetschy, of Saletz, emigrated from Zurich on the 4th of October, 1734, accompanied by his family. He arrived in Philadelphia, but suddenly fell dead as soon as he stepped on shore.<sup>2</sup> One of his sons, named Henry, who was but seventeen years old at the time of his father's death, immediately began to preach, and became pastor of a charge in Pennsylvania.<sup>3</sup> It may perhaps be taken for granted that the family was nearly related to John Henry Goetschius, and that the young man began to preach under his direction.<sup>4</sup>

In the same vessel with Moritz Goetschius arrived John Conrad Wirtz (or Wuertz), *candidatus theologiæ*. He was a son of a recently deceased chief pastor of the cathedral church of Zurich, and was evidently well educated.<sup>5</sup> His wife's name was Elizabeth Goetschius, and she was prob-

<sup>1</sup> "Die Deutschen in Amerika," p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Dr. H. Escher, city librarian of Zurich, February 2, 1892.

<sup>3</sup> There is an inaccuracy in the Swiss record which makes it appear that the death of Moritz Goetschius occurred in 1736. We are, however, enabled to fix the date with certainty from the list of immigrants published by Rupp, and from the more recently printed "Pennsylvania Archives," vol. xvii. Moritz Goetschius arrived in the ship "Mercury" from Rotterdam, May 29, 1835. His name, of course, does not appear in the published lists, as he died before the ship's company could present themselves at the court-house to take the oath of allegiance; but we have the names of Henry Goetschy, Rudolph Goetschy, and Moritz Goetschy, of whom the two last mentioned are said to have been under sixteen years of age. The names of the female members of the family are not recorded.

<sup>4</sup> J. Henry Goetschius, Jr. (1718-74), was an eminent minister of the Reformed (Dutch) Church in New Jersey. From the exact correspondence in age we suppose him to have been the son of Moritz Goetschius, above mentioned, and not of John Henry, the elder, as has been hitherto supposed.

<sup>5</sup> According to the family record of the Wirtz family, furnished for this work by Dr. Hans Wirtz, rector of the gymnasium of Zurich, John Conrad Wirtz was born November 30, 1710. His forefathers for three generations

ably a daughter or other near relative of Moritz. That he allowed himself to be persuaded to undertake the work of the ministry is not surprising; but he seems to have remained longer without ordination than the circumstances imperatively demanded.<sup>1</sup>

Wirtz became the successor of J. H. Goetschius in that portion of his charge which is now included in Northampton and Lehigh counties. His name appears in the records of the Egypt and Lower Saucon churches, and several other churches in that region claim him as their founder. In 1750 he removed to New Jersey, where he was regularly ordained by the Presbytery of New Brunswick. In 1761 he became pastor of the Reformed church at York, Pa., but died in 1763, after two years' service. Harbaugh says: "Tradition has preserved his name in good savor, as an earnest and pious minister." In York he built a new church. "At the time of his death the floor was not yet laid; so they buried him under the altar."<sup>2</sup>

The migration from the fatherland arrived in successive waves, and those who crossed the sea together frequently settled in the same neighborhood. In the region in which Goetschius and Wirtz began their labors—between the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers, north of the valley of the Perkiomen—most of the people were of their own nationality. The Swiss immigration was largest between 1730 and 1736, and some congregations were almost exclusively composed of Swiss immigrants. They were not as poor as most of the earlier settlers had been, and were by no means lacking in intelligence. Concerning a large party which left Zurich about 1732, Salomon Hess, chief pastor

were eminent clergymen, and his elder brother, Jakob, was also active in the ministry. They belonged to the branch of the family which in Switzerland is known as "Engel-Wirtz."

<sup>1</sup> Harbaugh's "Life of Schlatter," p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> "Lives of the Fathers," vol. i., p. 393.

of that city, says in a book which we quote from memory : " There was no good reason at that time for them to leave their fatherland ; but they were seized by an insane desire to go to America. Many of them were in good circumstances and might have remained comfortably at home. A few may have felt oppressed by poverty, but work was plenty. The whole movement must be characterized as a piece of folly." This, it must be remembered, is a Swiss view of the subject, taken a century after the event. The emigrants themselves might have had another story to tell.

In the region west of the Schuylkill the most important congregations were Tulpehocken and Lancaster. Goetschius records the fact that he preached at Tulpehocken in 1731 ; but the church at Lancaster has no records earlier than 1736, in which year its earliest house of worship was erected. About half-way between these two places there were several small congregations in a district popularly known as *Weisseichenland*—" the land of the white oaks "—which were generally served from Lancaster. At times they were, however, supplied with preaching by a pious tailor named Conrad Tempelman, who may be regarded as the founder of the Reformed Church in a region of which the present town of Lebanon is the center.

Concerning the beginning of the churches in the present counties of Berks, Lebanon, Lancaster, and York, there are few extant documents. It may, however, be remarked that in this region the Swiss element was less important than in the present counties of Montgomery, Bucks, Northampton, and Lehigh. We are, therefore, not surprised to find that the people, who were mostly emigrants from the Palatinate, extended a cordial welcome to ministers who were sent to them from their native province. Pure German was, of course, always employed in the pulpit ; but it must have added greatly to the freedom of social inter-

course when a pastor was thoroughly familiar with the native dialect of his people. In time the Palatinate dialect took the lead, and, by admitting certain English words and forms, became the basis of what is now called Pennsylvania German; but at first there were differences in speech and customs which could not be ignored.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE MISSION FROM HEIDELBERG.

THE church of the Palatinate followed its emigrants with affectionate sympathy. Though the province had been greatly impoverished by recent wars, the *Oberconsistorium*, then located at Heidelberg, frequently considered the destitute condition of their brethren in Pennsylvania, and made efforts to aid them, to the extent at least of paying the expenses of young ministers or *candidati* on their voyage to America.

The earliest of the ministers who were thus aided was George Michael Weiss, to whose relations with Boehm we have already referred. As he exerted an important influence on the development of the church, it is proper to relate such facts as are known concerning his personal history.

George Michael Weiss was born at Stebbach—"a Palatine place in the Neckar Valley"<sup>1</sup>—about 1700. He was educated in the University of Heidelberg, and became a fine classical scholar. In 1725 he was ordained at Heidelberg, and two years later emigrated to America. His name appears at the head of the earliest recorded list of immigrants,<sup>2</sup> and it has been held that he was the leader of a "colony," consisting chiefly of his former parishioners; but the evidence on this subject is not clear. Very soon after his arrival he organized a church in Philadelphia, and

<sup>1</sup> "Chronicon Ephratense," p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Rupp's "Collection," p. 49.

also began preaching in Skippack. In the Philadelphia papers he advertised for pupils in the ancient languages, French, and music ; and teaching was probably at this time his chief means of support.

The most prominent member of the Skippack church was a miller named Jacob Reiff. In 1729 this man determined to visit his old home in Germany, and Weiss agreed to accompany him. As the Reformed churches of Philadelphia and Skippack were in great financial straits, Reiff and Weiss were formally requested by the officers of these churches to collect money and good books for them in Europe. It was generally supposed that Weiss would not return to America, and the financial responsibility was therefore committed to Reiff.<sup>1</sup> On his return to America the latter delayed to make settlement, and this led to a protracted suit in chancery. The matter was in many respects unpleasant ; but as Weiss was not in charge of the funds collected, he was not involved in the case. Reiff, it must be confessed, was careless in keeping his accounts, but there is no evidence of dishonesty. A part of the money was perhaps imprudently invested by him in merchandise which he believed could be sold to advantage in Philadelphia for the benefit of the churches ; but through a series of mishaps these goods were for several years detained in a British custom-house, and were released only after the payment of a large sum for duties and storage. This detention naturally prevented an early settlement. We do not know the exact amount collected, but probably not more than two thousand dollars in our present money, though it was generally supposed to be a larger sum. As the churches had promised to pay Reiff's traveling-expenses, and as he claimed credit for £150 previously

<sup>1</sup> See " Papers on the Reiff Case," " Ref. Ch. Review," 1893 ; also " Historic Manual," p. 169.

advanced by him toward the erection of the church at Skippack, it is evident that the sum remaining after these deductions cannot have been very large. The matter was not finally arranged until after the arrival of Michael Schlatter, who received from Reiff a balance of about six hundred and fifty dollars, after which he published a card expressing his confidence in Reiff's integrity.

Mr. Weiss returned to America in 1731, leaving Reiff in Germany, where he remained one year longer. During his brief visit to the fatherland Weiss gained the confidence of the church of Holland, and prepared the way for its subsequent missionary activity among the Germans in America. He was, no doubt, also instrumental in inducing several young men who had been his fellow-students at Heidelberg to follow him across the sea.

On his return to America Weiss settled among the Germans in New York, laboring chiefly in Dutchess and Schoharie counties. In 1746 he was driven away by Indian depredations, and found a refuge in Pennsylvania. Here he took charge of the Old and New Goshenhoppen and Great Swamp congregations, where he labored faithfully until 1761. The exact date of his death is not known.

Weiss was a man of ability and force of character. On the arrival of Schlatter he became his chief assistant in the work of ecclesiastical organization. He wrote several pamphlets in German and Dutch, which have now become excessively rare.

John Bartholomew Rieger (1707-69) appears to have accompanied Weiss on his return voyage. He had been educated at Basel and Heidelberg,<sup>1</sup> and was also a trained physician. He settled in Lancaster, Pa., and supplied the church in that place for a few years, but was generally occupied in preaching for country churches. Indeed, he

<sup>1</sup> "Chronicon Ephratense," p. 70.

seems never to have fully gained the confidence of the people of Lancaster; and this was probably due to the fact that he cared more for his medical practice than for his pastoral work. He was, however, a man of some talent, wrote religious poetry for Saur's paper, and took an active part in the organization of the Coetus.

John Peter Miller, who arrived in 1730, was also sent by the *Consistorium* of Heidelberg. Though he soon separated from the Reformed Church, his subsequent career is interesting as reflecting the peculiar character of the times.

Miller was born in 1710, in the district of Lautern, in the Palatinate. Concerning his early history little is known; but he was a fellow-student of Weiss and Rieger at Heidelberg. He came to this country with special authority to administer the sacraments, and soon after his arrival was formally ordained by the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia. The Rev. Jedediah Andrews, a member of the latter body, has left on record his impressions of his extraordinary scholarship. "We gave him," he says, "a question to discuss about justification, and he answered it in a whole sheet of paper in a very notable manner. He speaks Latin as well as we do our native tongue."<sup>1</sup> Soon afterward Miller became pastor of the church which Goetschius had founded at Tulpehocken. The settlement was, of course, much more extensive than the present pastoral charge.

The story of the founding of that settlement is interesting, not to say romantic. It will be remembered that in 1723 a part of the German settlement in Esopus, or Ulster County, N. Y., wearied by repeated acts of unkindness and oppression on the part of the colonial government, turned their faces toward Pennsylvania. Guided by friendly In-

<sup>1</sup> Harbaugh's "Lives of the Fathers," vol. i., p. 302.



dians, they made their way through the forest until they came to the mouth of the Swatara. Ascending that stream, they came to the fertile region which the Indians called Tulpehocken—"the land of the turtles"—and here at once they began to cultivate the soil. If the story of their experiences could be fully related, it would certainly be regarded as one of the most interesting episodes in our colonial history.<sup>1</sup>

The early settlers of Tulpehocken were of the Reformed and Lutheran confessions, and, according to the "*Chronicon Ephratense*," "they had agreed among themselves not to suffer among them any who were differently minded; so that many who were of like persuasion came to them." These precautions, however, failed to guard them from the evils which they feared.

For four years Miller labored faithfully in his charge at Tulpehocken. He built a church, and his people were harmonious and hopeful. Then, however, he came into contact with Conrad Beissel, the founder of the Order of the Solitary, at Ephrata; and under the influence of this extraordinary man, who has been called "the magician of the Conestoga," he renounced his pastoral charge and became a mystic and a monk.

Conrad Beissel (1691-1768) was born in the village of Eberbach, in the Palatinate. His father died before he was born and his mother when he was six years old. His early education was consequently neglected; but there can be no doubt that he was unusually talented. He learned to write his native language with fluency, was regarded as a natural mathematician, and became a musician of a superior order. From early childhood he was impressed with the idea that he would be called to some wonderful work; and though his poverty induced him to become a

<sup>1</sup> Rupp's "*History of Berks and Lebanon Counties*," p. 98.

baker, he never doubted that in due time he was to be a leader of men. Though he was baptized and confirmed in the Reformed Church, it had no attractions for his mystical nature. He sought the acquaintance of prominent pietists, and soon became more mystical than his teachers. Even at this early period he offered his "testimony" against marriage and glorified the monastic life. The "*Chronicon Ephratense*"<sup>1</sup> contains a full account of his early experiences, written by an enthusiastic admirer, from which it appears that he was not made to suffer persecution in any proper sense of the term. Attendance at church was still required by law as a condition of undisturbed residence; but one of the pastors at Heidelberg actually offered Beissel the required certificate of attendance if he would agree to walk through a church building once a year on a week-day. He refused to make even this concession, and was finally compelled to leave his native land. In 1720 he sailed to America and for some time consorted with the Dunkers, with some of whom he had been acquainted in Germany. After a year spent in Germantown, Pa., he removed, in company with a friend, to Lancaster County, where they built a hut and lived in voluntary poverty and privation. He began to preach and soon gathered a company of adherents. In 1724 a little company of Dunkers, led by Peter Becker, came from Germantown to Lancaster County on a missionary expedition, and Beissel's congregation desired to fraternize with them. At first, we are told, Beissel was in doubt whether he ought to be baptized by a man so greatly inferior to himself, but he finally decided to allow Becker to become "his John the Baptist."<sup>2</sup> Almost immediately

<sup>1</sup> Printed at Ephrata, 1786. An English translation was published by S. H. Zahm & Co., Lancaster, Pa., 1889.

<sup>2</sup> "*Chronicon Ephratense*," English ed., p. 25.

after the baptism it was discovered that there were doctrinal differences which ought to have been previously discussed. Beissel advanced his peculiar theories concerning the glories of celibacy, and this led to immediate dissension. It has, indeed, been said that the Ephrata Brethren were connected with the Dunkers for a single day only; but this statement is not strictly correct. It was not until 1728, when Beissel published a book in which he advocated the observance of the Old Testament Sabbath, that the schism became complete.

Beissel was not an orator in the usual sense of the word. He spoke with great rapidity and his style was involved and mystical. At first his preaching was not generally acceptable; for "he began his discourse with closed eyes, and when he finally opened them most of his hearers had disappeared." There were, however, some persons whom he strangely attracted, and who were willing to follow him wherever he went. Seidensticker calls him "another Pied Piper of Hamelin," who had but to tune his pipes to be followed by a multitude, not of children only, but of men and women as well. Like the early monastic leaders, he gathered around him a company of devout disciples, who at first proposed to live the life of anchorets. In 1732 they adopted a conventual rule, in close imitation of the Roman Catholic order of Capuchins; and began the erection of monastic buildings.

The "*Chronicon Ephratense*" relates at length how greatly Beissel was interested when he heard that two young Reformed ministers—Miller and Rieger—had arrived in America. "He thought his work would be better carried out if God had provided one of these young preachers for him, for which also he often bowed his knees before God." At first he tried to win Rieger, but his hopes were disappointed when he heard that he had taken



a wife. "O Lord," he exclaimed, "thou sufferest them to spoil in my very hands!" Then he directed his attention to the young pastor of Tulpehocken. In company with several of his disciples he visited Miller, and "was received by the teacher and elders with the consideration due to an ambassador of God." The result of this visit was that the pastor, the elders, and several members of the church at Tulpehocken became followers of Beissel and removed to Ephrata. Conrad Weiser, a Lutheran elder, and the most prominent man in all that region, also connected himself with the brotherhood, but subsequently withdrew. Miller, however, remained a willing instrument of Beissel, and after the death of the latter became the head of the order.

For more than sixty years Miller observed the strict rule of the Order of the Solitary. He was dressed in a gown of rough material, and at night he slept on a bench, with no pillow but a wooden billet. He was known by his monastic name as "Brother Jaebez," though he sometimes called himself "Peter the Hermit." He performed much literary labor, and was at the head of the extensive publishing operations of the society. Many hymns in the Ephrata collections were written by him, and he translated from Dutch into German a large part of the "Baptist Martyr-book," which was by far the largest publication issued in America during the colonial period.<sup>1</sup>

After he assumed the monastic life, Miller was entirely separated from the Reformed Church; but he was no controversialist. His piety was of a medieval type, though he had no fondness for the ceremonial of Rome. It is related that during the Revolution he appealed successfully in behalf of his bitterest enemy, Michael Widman, a Tory, who had been condemned to death.

1 "Der blutige Schauplatz, oder Märtyrer-Spiegel," Ephrata, 1748.



The Order of the Solitary disbanded soon after Miller's death, which occurred in 1796. In 1814 the property of the order was legally transferred to the Society of Seventh-day Baptists, of Ephrata, which now numbers less than fifty members.

The defection of John Peter Miller was a severe blow to the Reformed Church of this country in its formative period. To explain the motives which led him to this step would now be impossible; but it is probable that even before he came to America he had been influenced by the mysticism of which Beissel was a representative. It was no doubt easier to be a monk than to labor as a pioneer; but it is no less certain that he might have done more good by preaching the gospel than by continuing in the ascetic observances of the cloister.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONGREGATIONAL ORGANIZATION.

THE earliest German Reformed congregations in this country were organized in strict accordance with the pattern presented by the churches of the Palatinate and Lower Rhine. As early as 1563 the Elector Frederick III. had decreed that the churches of the Palatinate should elect elders and deacons, as was already usual in the church of France.

"The functions of the eldership," says Goebel, "were regarded as equal to those of the ministry in all things except the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments." Deacons were directed to provide for the wants of the poor; and during the sixteenth century their efforts in this direction were so successful that in the Rhine country pauperism entirely disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

The pastor, elders, and deacons in each congregation constituted a body which was officially termed *Consistorium* (Consistory) or *Presbyterium* (Presbytery), but was popularly called *Kirchenrath* (church council). Ordinarily one half of the Consistory was annually retired from active service; but the eldership was nevertheless regarded as a permanent vocation, and the men who had once been ordained to this office retained its functions, though they might be temporarily relieved from labor.

According to this pattern, which was familiar to the

<sup>1</sup> "Gesch. des chr. Lebens," vol. ii., p. 76.

Reformed churches everywhere, the earliest American congregations were constituted; and there is no evidence that any other form of government was even suggested.

It was only when it became necessary to employ the English language in official documents that confusion appeared. In Europe, as we have seen, many of the stricter members had objected to the use of a capital letter in the name of the church, preferring that it should be called, when a title was unavoidable, "the church reformed according to God's Word." Something of this ancient spirit may have survived in this country, for in early documents the name of the church rarely appears. In some of the oldest charters the church is very properly called Evangelical Reformed—to distinguish it from Evangelical Lutheran—and some prominent congregations still retain the word "Evangelical" in their official title. In other instances, and especially in the correspondence of the period, the church is more briefly termed "Reformed," either with a capital letter or without it. It was not until a later date that the term "German Reformed" came into use.

It is possible that the clerks in public offices may have regarded the name Reformed as too general to be sufficiently distinctive; but in their records they certainly taxed their inventive powers to the utmost to find another name for the Germans of this confession. They called them German Presbyterians, Dutch Calvinists, and other names, which added to the prevailing confusion. We have even seen a document in which certain property was granted for "the united use of the High and Low" churches, which, of course, means "Lutheran and Reformed." In a similar way elders were called ancients, censors, wardens, or anything else that suggested itself to the mind of the imperfectly informed official who attempted the work of translation.

Though there were local differences in doctrine and cultus, they did not materially interfere with the work of organization. It has, indeed, always been the chief glory of the Reformed Church that it does not exalt certain doctrines at the expense of the rest, but seeks to hold the truth in due and harmonious proportion. The consensus of the Reformed confessions was freely accepted, and those churches which received aid from Holland formally recognized the distinctive confessions of that country; but there can be no doubt that from the beginning the Heidelberg Catechism was the acknowledged bond of union,<sup>1</sup> and that no more definite statement of doctrine was deemed necessary than that which it contained.

Congregational constitutions dating from the earliest American period are exceedingly rare. Occasionally a printed broadside may be found, containing a few local regulations; but the general organization was apparently taken for granted. It is fortunate, however, that a few copies of the *Kirchenordnung*, or church constitution, prepared for his congregations by John Philip Boehm, in 1725, have been preserved, as this was undoubtedly the earliest form of discipline adopted by German Reformed congregations in America. It was subsequently revised and published by the Coetus of Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup> In order that our readers may form a correct idea of its general character we reproduce from the "Mercersburg Review" (October, 1876) the following extracts from the original "ordinances," or covenant, adopted by the churches at Falckner's Swamp, Skippack, and White Marsh, in 1725, and approved by the Classis of Amsterdam:

<sup>1</sup> This fact is explicitly stated by J. B. Rieger in a contribution to Saur's paper, published in 1749.

<sup>2</sup> "Der Reformirten Kirchen in Pennsylvanien Kirchenordnung," etc., Philadelphia, Gotthard Armbrister, 1748. (For full title see Hildeburn, vol. ii., p. 480.)



“ [It is agreed] that all the members of Consistory now in service in all the three villages shall be recognized and remain in their offices for their appointed term. Then all the members of the congregation shall, with the Minister and the rest of the consistory, choose new members of consistory. But at the same time all the members of the congregation shall transfer, each to his own consistory, all power and right henceforth to choose the consistory from year to year by a majority vote; since, through the increase and spreading abroad of the congregations, it is not practicable for all the members to meet just for this purpose.

“ The persons chosen shall be propounded for three Sundays each in his congregation, to see if any one makes any lawful objection; and, if not, they shall be ordained at the third announcement.

“ If it should happen (as we hope it will not) that one or more of the consistorial persons should walk disorderly, or create strife and division in the congregations, he or they shall be timely warned by the rest to give over such courses; and if they will not comply, they shall be put out of their offices; and others shall be chosen in their place out of such as have last been in service, and be regularly ordained, and then serve. And so in case any one dies in office.

“ When any Elder or Deacon goes out of office he shall be exempt for two years and then may again be chosen; or even earlier, if it is deemed necessary by the consistory for the time being.

“ The Minister, Elders, and Deacons, and the whole congregation shall determine the time when, on the Lord's Day and other days, and the places where, divine service shall be held.

“ The rite of Baptism shall always be administered, with-

out a fee, at the close of worship. Besides the Elders, there shall be witnesses at the baptism; and this edifying custom shall not be lightly altered. The witnesses must be sound in doctrine and blameless in life.<sup>1</sup>

“The Holy Supper shall be administered twice a year in each place where public worship is maintained. No one shall be admitted unless upon confession before the consistory and evidence of an upright life, or upon proper testimonials from other Reformed congregations, according to the Church Order of the Synod of Dort, anno 1618 and 1619. All the members shall constantly, as they are able, attend worship and appear at the preparatory sermon; and those who neglect this shall be spoken to by the consistory as they shall judge necessary. The old shall diligently instruct the young in the Reformed religion, and thereunto shall carefully provide for their hearing God’s Word in preaching and in catechizing; so that the young may also come to the Lord’s table. All the members of the three congregations shall have the right to commune in any one of them, no lawful hindrance existing, so long as they have the same minister.

“The bread and wine for the Lord’s Supper shall always be provided by the Deacons, who shall also collect and disburse the alms, and make faithful account of the same. The members of the consistory, whether Elders or Deacons, to whom the church chest and property are intrusted,

<sup>1</sup> The custom of having witnesses (sponsors) at baptism was common until a comparatively recent date, but has now become unusual. At present, even when sponsors are admitted, parents are required personally to assume the baptismal vows in behalf of their children. In early days there were sometimes as many as five sponsors at a single baptism, and their names were duly entered on the records of the church. At a later date the number was limited by custom to a single pair. Conscientious sponsors were careful to see to it that those for whom they had become sureties were faithfully instructed and prepared for confirmation and the holy communion; and instances were not rare when children, on the death of their parents, were adopted by their godparents.

shall annually make account of their administration before the congregation, and for this purpose shall keep a true record of receipts and expenditures. And the account, when approved, shall be signed by the minister in the name of all as satisfactory.

“In order to meet the necessities of the church, the Deacons shall always collect the alms at the end of service.

“If any member, male or female, fall into lewdness, such shall be under censure of the consistory until they promise and give evidence of amendment.

“The office and duty of the Minister shall be to preach the pure doctrine of the Reformed Church according to God's Word, and to administer the Seals of the Covenant at the proper time and place, to adhere strictly to the Confession of Faith of the Reformed Church, to explain in order the Heidelberg Catechism, and to catechise, and with the Elders to exercise discipline. He shall not, without necessity, omit to hold service at the prescribed time and place at Falckner's Swamp, Skippack, and White Marsh.

“A consistory shall be held at least every half-year, and the Minister shall record all ecclesiastical proceedings in a book.

“And if he should be inclined to go away, whether because called elsewhere or for other lawful reasons, he shall as soon as practicable give the congregations notice, so that they may not be left in distress, but may seasonably provide another suitable man. The Minister, also, shall in all other things bear himself as becomes a true servant of Christ, under Him the Great Shepherd of the sheep.

“The Minister, Elders, and Deacons shall maintain a careful oversight of the congregation, and shall appear at the appointed time and place to hold consistory, nor omit the same without ample cause. They shall, to the best of



their ability, faithfully execute the foregoing orders, each according to his office. Whoever knows of any offense committed by one of the consistory, or by any other member, shall feel bound in conscience to make it known, not through malice or hatred, but to remove scandal. The accused person shall not demand the name of his accuser, nor obstinately deny his proved faults, nor wickedly continue therein; such as do so shall be disowned as members of the congregation till they promise and show amendment of life.

“And if any one allege anything against the doctrine or life of the minister, or of any member of consistory, or of any other member, they shall abstain from everything injurious or slanderous, and not avenge themselves, but refer the matter to the consistory, who shall be bound to use all diligence to remove such scandal.”

We have no room for several additional articles, which refer to local conditions; but the above present a satisfactory view of our earliest congregational constitution. That it is lacking in logical order will be readily acknowledged, but it will even now be recognized as thoroughly Reformed.

The constitution of the church at Amwell, Hunterdon County, N. J., was adopted in 1749. It may be quoted as an example of a constitution that attempted minutely to regulate the daily conduct of the members, and in this respect it reveals the presence of pietistic influences. In its general principles it is, however, in full accord with the historic theory of Reformed church government; and it may, indeed, be remarked that in this country the form of congregational organization which was accepted in the beginning has substantially remained unchanged.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE "CONGREGATION OF GOD IN THE SPIRIT."

THE religious condition of the Germans of Pennsylvania in the earlier part of the eighteenth century was certainly deplorable. This condition, we venture to say, was caused less by poverty than by diversity of opinion. The country was described by a contemporary writer as "a wilderness of sects." The number of divisions was, indeed, far greater than it is at present; for besides larger bodies there were here and there little companies of mystics—Labadists, Inspirationists, New-born, Ronsdorfers, or Ellerians—who made themselves prominent to a degree that was hardly warranted by their numerical importance. As a natural consequence there were many places where the number of sects rendered concerted action impossible, and the people remained destitute of religious instruction.

As early as 1736 John Adam Gruber, of Oley, issued an address calling for some sort of union; but Gruber was himself an "Inspirationist," and the people were not disposed to accept him as a religious leader. The idea was then taken up by Henry Antes, "the pious Reformed man of Frederick Township," and under his leadership it promised for a while important results in the cause of Christian union.

Henry Antes was a remarkable man. Born about 1701, it is believed, at Freinsheim, Rhenish Bavaria, he came to America in early manhood in company with his parents.

He was a miller and millwright, but soon became an active man of business. Whenever his countrymen needed an adviser in civil affairs they came to him, and his services were constantly required for the drawing of wills and the settlement of estates. "In appearance and dress," says one of his descendants, "he was an enormous Dutch farmer, but in language and manner a courtier of the *ancien régime*."

When Boehm entered upon the work of the ministry, Antes was his chief adviser and most intimate friend. At a later period we find these men opposed to each other on questions of church polity; but in the sharp controversies which ensued it does not appear that they failed in courtesy to each other. Both were equally sincere, but it must soon have become evident that they severally represented different types of religious life.

In 1736 we find Antes ministering to the Reformed people of Oley. It does not appear that he preached to them, but he went from house to house and performed the work of an evangelist. In the same year he made the acquaintance of the celebrated Moravian missionary, Bishop Spangenberg, who for a time made his home at the house of Christopher Wiegner, in Skippack. At that Schwenkfelder homestead Antes frequently met a company of godly men representing different forms of faith, and here he seems to have taken up the idea of establishing a federative union of the German churches. A few years later he said: "I am Reformed; I am also Lutheran; I am also a Mennonite—a Christian is everything."<sup>1</sup> There is, however, no doubt that he had become thoroughly devoted to the Moravian brotherhood.

When the Rev. George Whitefield, the greatest revival preacher of modern times, visited Pennsylvania, in 1740,

<sup>1</sup> Dotterer's "John Philip Boehm," p. 18.

he was entertained at the house of Henry Antes, and preached there to a great multitude of people. The Moravian bishop, Petrus Boehler, preached in German on the same occasion.

Count Zinzendorf arrived in America, and Antes was one of the first to welcome him. The count, it is said, did not at first approve of the plan for the union of the churches; but having somewhat reluctantly given his consent, he soon became the leading spirit of the movement. In December, 1741, Antes issued a call for a meeting to be held in Germantown, January 1, 1742, and this meeting was followed by six others. The plan of union elaborated at these conventions was called the "Congregation of God in the Spirit." It was founded in strict accordance with Zinzendorf's theory of tropes, according to which every one might retain his denominational peculiarities, while he stood at the same time in a higher religious unity. The plan was promising, and it was welcomed by many excellent men. Zinzendorf and his coadjutors proceeded to ordain ministers for the Lutheran and Reformed Churches; but these ministers were expected to stand at the same time in the Unity of the Brethren. As far as the Reformed Church was concerned, Zinzendorf claimed the right of conferring the rite of ordination, by virtue of authority granted him by the Reformed antistes (or bishop) Jablonsky, of Berlin, who was also a bishop of the ancient Moravian community.

John Bechtel, pastor of the Reformed church in Germantown, was Zinzendorf's chief assistant in this work, so far as the Reformed Church was concerned. It was in his church that Zinzendorf preached his first sermon after his arrival in America; and in his house, in 1742, the earliest Moravian school in this country was opened.<sup>1</sup> Bechtel was

<sup>1</sup> Wickersham's "History of Education," p. 152.

a self-educated man, though not without decided talent. Originally a turner by trade, he had been induced by the necessities of the times to assume the office of the ministry, and had for fifteen years frequently preached for the Reformed congregation of Germantown. That he did not approve of Boehm's course in securing ordination from the church of Holland is sufficiently plain; and in April, 1742, he was ordained in his own church by Zinzendorf and Nitschmann.<sup>1</sup> In the same year Bechtel published a catechism which claimed to be in accordance with the decrees of the Synod of Berne (1531), and by implication a protest against the acceptance of the confessions of the church of Holland. This catechism appeared in German and English, and in 1743 was translated into Swedish. An edition was also published in Germany.<sup>2</sup> Immediately afterward Boehm published his "Getreuer Warnungsbrief," which was directed against the Moravians and naturally led to a "war of pamphlets."

In Philadelphia the Reformed and Lutherans occupied the same church building on alternate Sundays. Boehm was the Reformed pastor, but the Lutheran congregation was vacant. A part of the Lutheran congregation desired to secure the pastoral services of Zinzendorf; but before accepting their invitation the count addressed a letter to Mr. Boehm, inquiring whether he had "a right to present aught against his preaching there." In the same letter he went a little out of his way to remark: "I am not inclined to the doctrine of an absolute reprobation, as a doctrine which in my religion is confessedly held as fundamentally

<sup>1</sup> Fresenius, 1748, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> The following is the title of the English edition: "A Short Catechism for some Congregations of Jesus of the Reformed Religion in Pennsylvania, who keep to the ancient Synod of Bern; Agreeable to the Doctrines of the Moravian Church. First published in German by John Bechtel, Minister of the Word of God; Philadelphia, 1742."



and wholly erroneous." In his reply, which is rather cold and formal, Boehm declares that "the Reformed have nothing to enjoin on the Lutherans for their own time"; but that he desires to be "understood as protesting, if any one should say that permission was given from the Reformed side, or from me, to Count Zinzendorf to preach at the time and place belonging to us, the Reformed." There was subsequently some friction between Boehm and Zinzendorf, but the Reformed congregation of Philadelphia appears to have held compactly together. Among the Lutherans there was a conflict which finally resulted in the withdrawal of the friends of Zinzendorf. On the 31st of December, 1742, Zinzendorf delivered his farewell sermon in Philadelphia, and on the 9th of January, 1743, sailed from New York for Europe.

The "Congregation of God in the Spirit" seems soon to have become discouraged. As the movement became more and more Moravian many Reformed congregations refused to be served by ministers who stood in the "Unity." Some of these ministers fully identified themselves with the Moravians, while others appear to have tried to hold a double relation, and thus became practically independent. Antes was utterly discouraged by the failure of his well-meant plan. He removed to Bethlehem, but finally returned to his farm in Frederick Township, Montgomery County, where he died in 1755. Bechtel was dismissed by his congregation in 1744. "When I heard the decision," he says, in his autobiography, "it was a true comfort to me; and from that time forth I felt assured in my heart that I belonged to the Brethren Church." He removed to Bethlehem and was for many years prominent in the *Unitas Fratrum*. Christian Henry Rauch became an eminent Moravian missionary, and John Brandmiller was subsequently a printer at Bethlehem.

Jacob Lischy was ordained as a minister of the Reformed *tropos*, but held a position which was certainly unique. He was a brilliant preacher and an author of some repute. Sometimes he seemed entirely devoted to the Moravians, and then he would suddenly wheel around and attack them in print. Wherever he went he was welcomed by enthusiastic congregations, but also met with decided opposition. In 1743 a large meeting of his friends was held in Heidelberg Township to make arrangements for his defense against the calumnies of his enemies. A broadside published by this meeting is in possession of the author. It is not only signed by the representatives of nine congregations of which Lischy was then pastor, but also gives the names of thirteen prominent men who were thereafter to investigate any reports which might be circulated against him. A year later we find him in York County, where he spent his remaining years. He was deposed from the ministry, about 1760, for moral delinquency.

Like most of his contemporaries, Lischy could write "doggerel" with the utmost fluency, and Harbaugh gives in the original a so-called hymn which he wrote in 1745 "for the Consistory of the church at Mode Creek." It is, in fact, no hymn at all, and was never intended to be sung, but is interesting as reproducing the peculiar spirit of the movement in which its author was prominently engaged. We cannot resist the temptation to translate a few stanzas, as nearly as possible in the rude, unpolished style of the original:

JACOB LISCHY'S HYMN.

What would God's servant Zwinglius,  
And eke the reverend Calvinus,  
Say to their people if they could come  
To learn the evils of Christendom?  
Ah! who can tell?

Methinks they would weep with heartfelt grief  
To see their people without relief;  
For the world is full of sin and sorrow,  
That even Sodoma and Gomorrah  
Were hardly worse.

"Reformed is the name we bear," 'tis said;  
That means corrected and rightly led;  
But the poor souls have gone astray,  
And none of them all can find the way:  
*Kyrie eleis!*

In the decrees of the Synod of Berne  
'Tis fairly written, that all may learn,  
That Christ is the center of Christian teaching,  
And that his blest passion of all our preaching  
Must be the theme.

Now morals alone are preached to men,  
Though Jesus is mentioned now and then;  
In Lenten seasons, when preachers choose,  
They growl a little against the Jews,  
How bad they were.

But we, by wisdom divine elected,  
And as his people by grace directed,  
The passion of Jesus exalting higher,  
Will join for aye with the heavenly choir,  
To praise the Lamb.

The "Congregation of God in the Spirit," as proposed by Henry Antes and elaborated by Count Zinzendorf, was so grand in its conception, so exalted in its purposes, that we may perhaps regret that it did not prove more successful. It is evident, however, that the churches were not ready for the proposed union, and under the most favorable conditions it would most probably have resulted in the organization of another Christian denomination. While, therefore, we may regret the failure of a well-meant plan, we appreciate the necessity which resulted in the consolidation of the evangelical churches and in their further development along their ancient historic lines.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MICHAEL SCHLATTER.

THE arrival of Michael Schlatter, on the 1st of August, 1746, marks an important epoch in the history of the German Reformed Church. He had been sent to America by the Synods of Holland, with directions to visit the scattered churches and as soon as possible to establish an ecclesiastical organization. This work he accomplished in the face of extraordinary difficulties, and therefore deserves a prominent place in the records of his church.

The people of Holland had shown great kindness to the German emigrants when they passed through their country on the way to America. They still remembered their poverty at the time of the emigration, and could well understand their subsequent religious destitution. When, as early as 1728, the ecclesiastical authorities of the Palatinate, appreciating the fact that in their own impoverished condition they could not properly provide for the American churches, commended these churches to the care of the Synods of Holland, the latter responded with the enthusiasm which had characterized their missionary labors in other distant lands. By the correspondence of Boehm and the visit of Weiss and Reiff this interest was increased, and the Classis of Amsterdam was made the organ and representative of the national Synods in this department of missionary activity.

At first the Dutch Synods naturally hesitated about



undertaking a work of such importance in a country which was under British dominion. In 1743 they commissioned the Rev. Peter Henry Dorstius, pastor of the Dutch church at Neshaminy, Pa., to present a letter to the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia, inquiring whether it would not be possible to consolidate the Presbyterian, Reformed Dutch, and German Reformed Churches in America into a single body. In their reply the Presbyterians tacitly declined to enter into such a union, but declared their willingness to join with the Reformed "to assist each other as far as possible in promoting the common interests of religion."<sup>1</sup> It was only after this well-meant movement for union had failed that the Dutch Synods formally took charge of the German churches in America. After this event the chief difficulty was to find a man who was qualified by disposition and training to take charge of the work of missions in America, and at the same time to serve as a personal bond of union with the fatherland. It was, therefore, fortunate in the highest degree that there was a young man at hand whose qualifications were extraordinary, and who humbly and devoutly offered himself for this important service.

Michael Schlatter was born in the ancient town of St. Gall, in Switzerland, on the 14th of July, 1716. He was of an eminent family, and his mother was a descendant of the elder Zollikofer. Concerning his early life we know little; but he was carefully educated, under the special care of the well-known Professor Wägelin. Tradition represents him as less fond of study than of climbing mountains; and Harbaugh relates a story that in his early boyhood he went without permission to Holland, to visit relatives who were settled there. This story does not seem probable, for when fourteen years old he was formally rec-

<sup>1</sup> Briggs's "American Presbyterianism," pp. 284-288.

ognized as a candidate for the ministry; and it is hardly likely that in those days the authorities would have accepted a candidate who had just been guilty of such an escapade. That he attended the universities is known, but the particulars cannot be accurately determined. Having finished his course, he went to Holland, where he was for some years engaged in teaching, at the same time becoming familiar with the language of that country. During this period he was ordained to the ministry. Returning to Switzerland, he was, in 1745, vicar of Wigoldingen, in Thurgau, and afterward for a short time "Sunday evening preacher" at Lintebuehl, a suburb of St. Gall. These positions were merely temporary, and early in 1746 he went to Holland and offered his services for the proposed mission to America. In Holland he was well known, and the Synods felt no hesitation in calling him to the work and giving him their unreserved confidence.

On the 1st of June, 1746, Schlatter set sail for Boston. The voyage, which lasted exactly two months, was in the main prosperous, though in his "Journal" he refers to a narrow escape from shipwreck on Sable Island. In Boston he remained but three days, and then, having sent his luggage by water, started on horseback for New York. There he was cordially received by the Dutch pastors, who were greatly interested in his mission. On the 6th of September he arrived in Philadelphia, and was welcomed by the elders of the church.

The wonderful energy of Schlatter was at once apparent. On the day after his arrival in Philadelphia he rode sixteen miles to Whitpain to visit Boehm, who was now an aged man. Next day he went to see Jacob Reiff at Skippack, and made arrangements for the final settlement of his account with the church. A week later we find him at Neshaminy, where he received from Dorstius a promise

of earnest coöperation. Immediately returning to Philadelphia, he preached there and in Germantown on the 18th, and next day went to see Weiss at Goshenhoppen. The older ministers were evidently influenced by his enthusiasm, and on the 22d Weiss and Schlatter started for Lancaster by way of Oley, and Boehm went directly to Tulpehocken, where the others were to meet him after the people had been prepared for their coming. At Lancaster Schlatter and Weiss consulted with Rieger and restored the harmony of the congregation, which had been somewhat disturbed; rode twenty-nine miles to Tulpehocken; preached there, and induced the people to subscribe three hundred Dutch guilders for the support of a settled pastor; thence back to Lancaster, where a similar work was accomplished; and on the 28th Schlatter returned to Philadelphia and Weiss "returned to his post in Old Goshenhoppen."<sup>1</sup> This is but an outline of the work accomplished by Schlatter within about three weeks of his arrival in Pennsylvania. In his "Journal," reprinted by Harbaugh, particulars are more fully related, but what we have said is enough to show that when he had a work to do Schlatter was not disposed to "let the grass grow under his feet."

On the 12th of October, 1746, the pastors Boehm, Weiss, and Rieger met, at Schlatter's request, in Philadelphia, preliminary to the establishment of a general ecclesiastical organization. Dorstius was unable to be present, but sent an encouraging letter. There were several other Reformed preachers in Pennsylvania at that time, but they were not regularly ordained, and were, therefore, not invited. The meeting was harmonious, and it was agreed to hold a *Coetus*, or Synod, during the following year. This meeting was actually held, in Philadelphia, on the 29th of Sep-

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Schlatter," p. 135.



tember, 1747, and was attended by thirty-one ministers and elders.

The circumstances of the churches in Philadelphia and Germantown rendered it absolutely necessary that Schlatter should become their pastor, and he was regularly installed by his predecessor, Boehm. He was not willing, however, to suffer the duties of a regular pastorate to interfere with his special mission, and during the succeeding year he made many extensive journeys, and for extended periods preached almost every day. From northern New Jersey to the valley of Virginia there was hardly a Reformed congregation which he did not visit, except some of those which were supplied by independent ministers. The roads, it must be remembered, were generally rude bridle-paths, and bridges were almost unknown. Though he does not dilate on these matters, he tells us how in April, 1747, he crossed the Susquehanna, when the river was unusually high, in a boat rowed by twelve stalwart men, under circumstances which rendered the crossing extremely dangerous. Wherever he went he organized the churches according to instructions received in Europe, and induced the people to pledge themselves to pay a certain amount in support of a pastor. In this way he succeeded in establishing sixteen charges, each consisting of several congregations. In the succeeding year he was greatly encouraged by the arrival of three ministers, Dominicus Bartholomæus, John Jacob Hochreutiner, and John Philip Leidich. Bartholomæus settled in Tulpehocken, and Leidich became the successor of Boehm at Falckner's Swamp. Hochreutiner had been assigned to Lancaster, but on the morning when he intended to leave Philadelphia on his way to his field of labor he was accidentally killed by the explosion of a gun which he had brought from the fatherland, and which he was trying to unload.



In his pocket was found the manuscript of the sermon which he had proposed to preach in Lancaster on the succeeding Lord's day. Schlatter published this sermon, accompanying it with a sympathetic introduction, under the appropriate title, "*Schwanengesang*."<sup>1</sup> To Schlatter this event was the source of profound sorrow. The young man was the son of the rector of the gymnasium in Schlatter's native city of St. Gall. No doubt the son had been in a certain sense confided to Schlatter's care, and the event was therefore doubly distressing.

During the whole of his public career Schlatter was encouraged by the coöperation and personal friendship of the Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, of the Lutheran Church, who had come to America in 1742, "on nearly the same footing and for the same object."<sup>2</sup> Both men stood for law and order, and were compelled to contend with very similar opposition. It was therefore but natural that they should be closely drawn together; and in published writings each refers to the other in terms of sincere respect. \* Indeed, Schlatter intimates that by their mutual coöperation the fellowship of the churches was preserved "sacred and inviolate," and expresses the wish that "traces of such harmony might also be found in Germany."

While Schlatter was absent on long missionary journeys trouble was brewing in his church in Philadelphia. There was a party in the congregation which opposed the close alliance with the church of Holland, and in course of time it became evident that they were unwilling to submit to the established discipline of the church. They even de-

<sup>1</sup> A copy is in the Philadelphia Library. It was translated and published in the "*Reformed Quarterly Review*" for July, 1886, under its original title, "*The Song of the Swan*."

<sup>2</sup> "*Journal*," chap. iii.; Harbaugh's "*Life*," p. 138.

clared their unwillingness to elect a pastor for more than a single year. In 1749 the Rev. John Conrad Steiner, of Winterthur, Switzerland, arrived in Philadelphia, and the party of opposition at once seized the occasion to create disturbance. Steiner was a fine preacher, who, in Europe, had gained considerable reputation by the publication of "The Midnight Cry," a series of sermons on the second coming of the Lord. The Germans of Philadelphia were fascinated by his eloquence, and he was irregularly elected pastor of the Reformed church instead of Schlatter. This was the beginning of a series of intense conflicts, which were finally decided by the civil authorities in favor of Schlatter, after which Steiner's party withdrew and formed a separate congregation. Steiner was personally unobjectionable, but all authorities agree that his position in opposition to Schlatter is not to be justified. After a year of conflict he removed from Philadelphia, and after successively serving as pastor in Germantown and Frederick, Md., was in 1759 recalled to Philadelphia, the congregations having in the meantime reunited. After his death, which occurred in 1762, another collection of his sermons was published.

Schlatter had now fulfilled the terms of his commission, so far as concerned the arrangement of pastoral charges and the establishment of a general ecclesiastical organization, but the chief difficulties to successful work had not been removed. The poverty of the churches continued, and most of the charges were vacant. The death of John Philip Boehm, which occurred May 1, 1749, was also a discouraging event; for, though aged, he earnestly labored to the end of his life, especially in the work of supplying vacant congregations. In 1751 the Coetus requested Schlatter to go to Europe to present the cause of the destitute German Reformed churches of America. This

work he accomplished with remarkable success. The Synods of Holland had been discouraged by what they had heard of the troubles in Philadelphia, but his personal presence removed all doubt. His "Journal," accompanied by an earnest "Appeal," was published in Dutch and German, and in a short time the sum of £12,000 was collected and invested for the benefit of the churches of Pennsylvania. The interest of this sum was to be paid annually for the support of the American churches and pastors; but as a condition of this aid the Coetus was to be in all things subordinate to the Classis of Amsterdam. Its minutes, translated into Dutch, were to be annually sent to Holland, and none of its acts were final until they were there approved. The Coetus was not permitted to administer the rite of ordination, and no new ministers were to be admitted without the special approval of the church in Holland. It will therefore be seen that, while the generosity of the church was remarkable, the conditions under which it was exercised were sufficiently strict.

In 1752 Schlatter returned to America, bringing with him six young ministers—Otterbein, Stoy, Waldschmid, Frankenfeld, Wissler, and Rubel. Seven hundred Bibles were sent for gratuitous distribution, and a few of these are still preserved as precious relics.

The success which had attended the labors of Schlatter in Holland and Germany suggested an extensive educational movement in behalf of the Germans of Pennsylvania. The Rev. David Thomson translated Schlatter's "Appeal" into English, and a Society for the Promotion of the Knowledge of God among the Germans was organized in England. A large sum of money—said to have amounted to £20,000—was collected for the establishment of charity schools in Pennsylvania. These schools were not intended



for a single denomination of Christians, but it was determined that schools should be established among the Germans wherever the trustees deemed it advisable and the people manifested a willingness to contribute a part of the expense of maintaining them.

The purpose of this educational movement was no doubt originally purely philanthropic, but the manner in which it was conducted was, to say the least, imprudent. In order to attract attention to the scheme, the Germans were represented as ignorant beyond comparison; and it was even suggested that unless means were taken for their proper training they would soon become "like unto wood-born savages." Not a word was said about the congregational schools which the Germans had themselves established; nor was there the least intimation of the existence of the publishing houses which they had founded and sustained. Archbishop Hering is charged with having given currency to a suggestion that unless the Germans of Pennsylvania were speedily Anglicized they might unite with the French and drive the English from the continent of America. The absurdity of the imputation did not prevent its circulation, and the Lutherans, in 1754, and the Reformed, in 1756, adopted resolutions expressing their indignation at these contemptible insinuations.

Schlatter was so profoundly interested in the educational advancement of the Germans that he allowed himself to be persuaded to become superintendent of the charity schools. There can be no doubt that he did his best for the cause, and schools were established in Lancaster, Reading, York, Easton, and other places; but, unfortunately, the management was in the hands of men who made no secret of their intention to employ the schools as a means of breaking the alliance which had hitherto subsisted between the Germans and the Quakers.



The trustees represented the colonial gentry, and when they rode about in their coaches to establish schools they certainly did not do much to conciliate the recipients of their bounty. The charity was admirable in its nature and purpose, but its administration had all the peculiarities of British officialism during the colonial period.

For some time the Reformed and Lutheran ministers sustained Schlatter in his arduous labors, but it soon became evident that they had not sufficient influence to save the charity schools. The people were greatly excited, and held meetings, in which they resolved not to patronize them. In this course they were encouraged by Christopher Saur, who in his influential paper intimated that the whole scheme was intended to prepare the way for the establishment of the Church of England. The German people were indignant at what they conceived to be the misrepresentations which had produced the "foreign charity." "It was," says Harbaugh, "in a measure at least, a just indignation; and we feel disposed first to blame them somewhat for a lack of humility, and then to praise them more for their manliness and sense of honor." We do not dissent from this judgment, but cannot help feeling that if they had been a little more intelligent and a little less proud it might have been better for their descendants.

In the midst of the prevailing excitement Schlatter's earlier services were forgotten, and, as the superintendent of charity schools, he became the main object of popular opposition. Utterly disheartened, he resigned his position, became a chaplain in the British army, and was present at the siege of Louisburg. After his return to Philadelphia he lived in retirement at a place which he called "Sweetland," at Chestnut Hill, near Philadelphia. His wife was a daughter of Henry Schleydorn, an eminent merchant, and the family appears to have been in comfort-

able circumstances. During the Revolution he earnestly advocated the American cause, and was imprisoned while the British held Philadelphia. He died in October, 1790, and was buried in the Reformed churchyard in Philadelphia, now Franklin Square.

The portrait of Schlatter which was rescued from the British by his daughter Rachel represents a man with strongly marked Swiss features, seated before an open Bible. He is said to have been of small stature, but active and versatile. Though a good classical scholar, he was rather a man of action than of profound thought. As a writer his style was somewhat formal, and as a preacher he was less popular than many of his contemporaries.

Though the charity schools were not successful, the movement certainly directed attention to the cause of education. Though the fund was retained in England, and was subsequently applied to other purposes, Harbaugh intimates that the "college and academy" in Philadelphia, from which the University of Pennsylvania was historically derived, in some way profited by it. In the places where charity schools had been established, the congregational schools were greatly improved, and several of them enjoyed considerable reputation. This educational movement must not, therefore, be regarded as an utter failure, but as a period of genuine advancement.

Though the public life of Schlatter was limited to a few years, there are few men who have accomplished so much in a long lifetime. His organization of the churches was permanent, and the ecclesiastical body which he founded is still in existence. The funds which he personally collected in Europe were securely invested, and from their income the Reformed churches of this country for many years derived valuable aid. The ministers whom he induced to come to his aid became the leaders of the church,

and to some of them belongs the credit of having saved it from destruction. Even as regards his connection with the charity schools, it must not be forgotten that he was practically the earliest superintendent of public instruction in Pennsylvania, and that, at least, he made an earnest effort for the intellectual advancement of his people. After all, the failures of one man are often more brilliant than the successes of another; and the pioneer who is rejected by his contemporaries may be deservedly honored by succeeding generations.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE COETUS.

THE events which we have related were succeeded by a season of gloom and depression. That there were reasons for discouragement is sufficiently evident. During this period, however, the Coetus which Schlatter had founded prevented utter disintegration and prepared the way for a brighter future.

The term "Coetus" is said to have been applied by John à Lasco, in 1544, to a conference of ministers which he had founded at Embden. In America it was more than a meeting for mutual encouragement. It was, in fact, composed of ministers and elders, and resembled a Synod in every respect, except that its acts were subject to revision by the Synods of Holland, and that it was not permitted to administer the rite of ordination.

The annual meetings of the Coetus were characterized by considerable dignity, not to say formality. The members generally met at the school-house and marched in solemn procession to the church, where the *Praeses* of the preceding year preached the opening sermon. The letters from Holland were then read, and the state of the churches minutely considered. Then the elders were for a time dismissed, and the *censura morum* was held, at which the character of individual ministers was investigated and advice given with regard to future conduct. Of course there are no records of these private meetings, but it is possible that on such occasions remarks were made which were too personal to be pleasant, and after a while the



*censura morum* was changed into the presentation of reports of the state of the congregations, read in the presence of the elders. At the close of the sessions, which generally lasted three days, the "Holland stipend" was divided, in accordance with the instructions of the fathers. Sometimes a few neighboring ministers held conferences in the course of the year to consider matters of local interest. The latter meetings were called "convents," placing the accent on the second syllable of the word.

The minutes of the Coetus manifest considerable activity on the part of individual ministers. In consequence of the prevailing religious destitution, it was, indeed, almost impossible for a pastor to confine his labors to a definite field. In 1757 the Rev. J. C. Steiner reported that he had traveled 2690 miles in visiting vacant churches, and other ministers evidently labored with equal energy.

As the minutes of the Coetus were written with special reference to their examination in Holland, they entered into particulars with a degree of minuteness which even now renders them more interesting than ordinary ecclesiastical proceedings. The fathers insisted that they should be translated into Dutch or Latin before they were sent to Europe, and this necessity was sometimes burdensome. Indeed, as one of the secretaries remarks, "It is difficult to choose between writing in a language which one has never properly learned, or in another which one has in great measure forgotten."

From the replies of the fathers in Holland it is evident that they considered every question with the utmost care. Sometimes, we might suppose, they would plead ignorance of local conditions and give their general approval of the work of the Coetus without entering into particulars, but this was not their ordinary method. On the contrary, they examined every point with great minuteness, and

manifested no hesitation in reversing the acts of the Coetus when they did not fully meet their approval. It is strange that not one of them ever personally visited the field. The "stipend" was regularly paid, and no doubt it did a great deal of good; but it was interpreted as applicable to pastors and schools in Pennsylvania alone, except in special cases of which the fathers were the judges. The pastors in other provinces were accordingly dissatisfied, and those of New Jersey pleaded in vain for the establishment of another Coetus.

The ministers of the Coetus were generally well-educated men; but they represented various schools of theology, and differed, of course, in ability as well as in earnestness of purpose. Of the six ministers whom Schlatter brought from the fatherland, Stoy and Otterbein became eminent men; but their personal history indicates that they represented extreme tendencies in the life of the church.

William Stoy was born in Herborn, Germany, March 14, 1726, and died at Lebanon, Pa., September 14, 1801. He was a man of considerable talent and force of character, but eccentric, and unwilling to submit to authority. After preaching for several years he went to Leyden and studied medicine. On his return he became celebrated as a medical practitioner, and it was generally believed that he had discovered a cure for hydrophobia. He was pastor of many congregations, and aspired to be a political leader. In 1772 he withdrew from the Coetus, and was afterward its active opponent. It is said that he preached in white clothes, "for fear of being mistaken for a *black-coat*." In 1784 he was elected a member of the Pennsylvania legislature, and in this position manifested decided ability. In his opposition to the Coetus he accused ministers of conspiring against the liberty of the people, and has been regarded as in great measure responsible for

the tendency to independence which has afflicted the region in which he labored.

It would be impossible to understand the history of the Reformed Church of the last century without acknowledging the fact that at an early period two parties were developed in the Coetus itself. Ordinarily they worked together with reasonable harmony; but it was understood that they differed widely in their views of church polity, and occasionally they came into violent collision. These parties, in a general way, resembled the "Old Side" and "New Side" in the Presbyterian Church. Those who held to the first party laid great stress on purity of doctrine, which they regarded as a precious trust that should not be lightly committed to enthusiasts. To them the educational system of the Reformed Church was one of the main reasons for its continued existence; and the established means of grace were regarded with a degree of reverence which their opponents declared to be superstitious. Naturally this party was strongest where the community was entirely German and ancient traditions had consequently remained unimpaired. The other party, though it included some learned men, was inclined to relax the ancient rules by admitting to the ministry pious men who had not enjoyed the advantages of a systematic education. Deeply impressed with the deplorable religious condition of the people, they would gladly have sent forth a multitude of evangelists, in the hope of thus winning multitudes for the cause of Christ. The members of this party were popularly known as Pietists, and some of them had been trained under Pietistic influences in Germany, though they were perhaps more directly influenced by contemporary movements in the English churches. Among the most prominent of those who were called Pietists was Philip William Otterbein, who was, during the



entire period of the Coetus, one of the most active and useful ministers of the Reformed Church. His later history is, however, so interesting and important that we shall treat it at length in a subsequent chapter.

For many years the Coetus generally met either in Philadelphia or in Lancaster. These churches were regarded as the most important, and their pastors were men of great influence. Next to them were churches in the city of New York, Easton and York, Pa., and Frederick and Baltimore, Md. Most of the pastors were, however, in charge of country congregations, and we have no doubt that their position was decidedly more comfortable.

Among the most prominent members of the Coetus the following may be enumerated:

JOHN DANIEL GROS, D.D. (1737-1812), was the founder of the church of Allentown, Pa. He subsequently removed to New York, where he became pastor of the church in Nassau Street, serving also as professor in Columbia College. He published, in 1795, "Natural Principles of Rectitude," which was in its day regarded as an important work.

CASPAR DIETRICH WEYBERG, D.D., pastor in Easton and Philadelphia (died 1790), was especially active in promoting the cause of education among the Germans, in whose behalf he wrote and published a number of influential pamphlets.

WILLIAM HENDEL, D.D., pastor successively at Lancaster, Tulpehocken, and Lancaster, was regarded as one of the best preachers of his time. He died in Philadelphia, in 1798, of yellow fever.

NICHOLAS POMP (1734-1819) was a man of great personal influence and force of character. He wrote and published a reply to "The Everlasting Gospel," a volume favoring universal salvation,<sup>1</sup> then attributed to Paul

<sup>1</sup> "Kurzgefasste Prüfungen des ewigen Evangeliums," Philadelphia, H. Miller, 1774. (See Am. Ch. Hist. Series, vol. x., p. 376.)



Siegvölck. After many years of faithful labor in Baltimore and elsewhere, he resided in Easton, Pa., supplying several country congregations in the neighborhood of that place. Harbaugh relates that after he had been disabled by accident his people made arrangements to have him carried by four men, on a litter, a distance of twelve or fifteen miles, so that they might enjoy the privilege of hearing him preach.

J. C. ALBERTUS HELFFENSTEIN (1748-90) was pastor at Lancaster and Germantown. He was an eloquent preacher, and several volumes of his sermons have been published.

CHRISTIAN LUDWIG BECKER (1756-1818) arrived in America in 1793, and his work properly belongs to a later period. He was in Europe the author of several large volumes, and in this country he published a volume of sermons<sup>1</sup> and several minor works.

About thirty of the ministers who were at different times members of the Coetus had been educated at German universities, and there can be no doubt that it was a learned and dignified body. By the nature of its constitution its work was, however, circumscribed, and its numbers did not rapidly increase. Though the fields of labor continued large the ministers were sustained by the profound respect of their congregations. Indeed, in many places the pastor became the general adviser, if not practically the ruler, of his people. No doubt there was a tendency toward formalism—a "broadening down from precedent to precedent." It must, however, be remembered that in this period the foundations of the Reformed Church in the United States were securely laid.

1 "Sammlung geistreicher Predigten," Baltimore, 1810.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE INDEPENDENTS.

THOUGH the Coetus included the most advanced and promising elements in the Reformed Church of this country, there were always some ministers who were not connected with that body. These men differed among themselves in character and purpose, and have left few records of their labors. Some of them were worthy men who had been ordained in Europe; but having come to America on their own responsibility, they recognized no obligation to submit to the direction of the Synods of Holland.

There was, however, a larger class of so-called independent ministers who were not so highly regarded. A few of these were survivors of the unordained preachers who at an earlier period had undertaken the work of the ministry on their own responsibility and without adequate preparation; but the greater number were mere pretenders who eked out a miserable existence by traveling from one vacant charge to another and preaching for the collections which might happen to "fall." When some half-educated German—possibly a drunken schoolmaster, a discharged military officer, or a worthless sprig of nobility—had become financially stranded in America, it was an easy expedient to pretend to be a minister, and thus to impose on an unsuspecting community. Of course the real character of the man soon became apparent; but his luggage was light, and he had no difficulty in removing to

some new field. The people soon learned to appreciate the character of these fellows, and called them *Herumläufer*, or vagrants; but though they unceremoniously ran them out of the neighborhood where their true character was revealed, they were naturally unsuspecting and were ready to listen sympathetically to the next plausible pretender. There can be no doubt that during the colonial period these worthless fellows were a main obstacle to the progress of the church.

That the Coetus recognized a wide distinction between these several classes is sufficiently evident. When, as sometimes happened, a worthy minister who had hitherto labored independently in New York or the Carolinas unexpectedly appeared at a meeting of Coetus, he was cordially welcomed, and his name was without hesitation placed on the roll of members. He was henceforth said to have been "legitimated"; but on account of the great distance he could hardly be expected to attend regularly, and in a year or two his name was apt to disappear from the roll.

It is a remarkable fact that the Reformed minister who during the colonial period enjoyed the most extended reputation belonged to the better class of independents. The author having come into possession of some original material concerning his remarkable career, it is proper to consider it with some particularity.

JOHN JOACHIM ZUBLY, D.D., whose name is also written Zubley, Zübli, and Züblein, was born at St. Gall, Switzerland, August 24, 1724. His father emigrated to America with his family in 1726,<sup>1</sup> and settled in South Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The "Guardian," September, 1867.

<sup>2</sup> The father appears to have been a man of some culture. On a page of the *hortus amicorum*, or album, belonging to the son—now in possession of the author—the father has placed an original drawing, representing the ascent

When the son was but sixteen years old he was sent to Europe to be educated for the ministry. He studied at Tübingen and Halle, and was ordained at Coire (Chur), Switzerland, in 1744, before he was quite twenty years old. During his sojourn in the fatherland he made the acquaintance of many eminent men, whose names and *vota* appear in his album. Making all allowance for the somewhat extravagant expression of personal affection which was common to the age, there can be no doubt that these men were profoundly interested in the "boy minister." The month of August, 1744, he spent in London, where Ziegenhagen and others added their best wishes to his collection of autographs.

It has been supposed that Zubly was for a time the pastor of a charge in Pennsylvania; but the recent discovery of documents leaves no time for this pastorate.<sup>1</sup> In 1745 he was in South Carolina with his parents; in 1746 he visited George Whitefield at his orphanage at "Bethesda," near Savannah, and in his "albo-lines" the celebrated preacher calls him *ex intimo corde*—his "son in the Lord." In 1749 he was pastor of a German church at Charleston, S. C., and at this time a call was extended to him by the Reformed church of Lancaster, Pa.; but it must have been declined, as he never became pastor of that congregation. In 1753 he visited the North and

of Elijah, together with his best wishes for his son's success in the ministry, concluding with the following quaint stanza:

"So wünschet denn aus liebem Herz,  
Und zeichnet auch mit Liebeshand,  
Der des Besitzers Vater ist,  
Und David Zübli wird genannt.

"Gemacht in Purrysbourg, South Carolina, in Granville County, Anno Domini 1745."

<sup>1</sup> Mittelberger, in his "Reise nach Pennsylvanien" (1750-54), enumerates Zubly as one of six Reformed ministers at that time officiating in Pennsylvania; but it is plain that he was a visitor and not a settled pastor.



seems to have traveled pretty extensively. Among those who at this time wrote a few lines in his *hortus amicorum* were Michael Schlatter, H. M. Muhlenberg, and several other prominent Reformed and Lutheran ministers, besides such well-known ministers of other churches as Gilbert Tennent, Aaron Burr, president of Princeton College, Alexander Cumming, of the Old South Church, Boston, and the Swedish ministers of Philadelphia. On one page is the following:

"Sabbath morning is fixed upon for a mutual Remembrance of us y<sup>e</sup> subscribers thro' Divine Grace in Secret at y<sup>e</sup> Throne of Grace.

"JAMES DAVENPORT,

"J. J. ZUBLY.

"PHILADELPHIA, May 16, 1753."

When it is remembered that Davenport was the most enthusiastic revivalist of his age, who at an earlier date had destroyed by fire "wigs, cloaks, breeches, hoods, gowns, rings, jewels, necklaces, and certain books, in order to cure the people of their idolatrous love of worldly things,"<sup>1</sup> there can be little doubt that Zubly sympathized with the "New Side." That he did not approve of the fanatic asceticism of the mystics is evident from his hitherto unpublished letter, addressed, in 1755, to Conrad Beissel, the founder of the Ephrata brotherhood. Though it differs in style from the ordinary correspondence of the writer, it is in other respects so characteristic that we here reproduce it:

"TO FRIEDSAM IN EPHRATA: Grace and every blessing in the knowledge of ourselves and of our eternal Mediator and High Priest!

<sup>1</sup> "Cyclopædia of American Biography," vol. ii., p. 84.

"I have been considerably exercised in mind as to whether I should answer your recent letter or not—partly because I have enough to do with my own miseries and many infirmities; partly because I can readily conclude, from the spirit which reveals itself in your letter, that any representation from me would in your eyes be lightly regarded—and inasmuch as you consider yourself much more highly exalted than I am (if you are further advanced in grace than I you merely excel a weak infant) you will probably not suppose yourself obliged to receive an exhortation from me.

"Inasmuch, however, as you intimate how exalted is the order, or perhaps responsibility, into which you regard yourself as having been placed by God, I will tell you honestly how you appear to me. May the Lamb whose eyes are like flames of fire reveal in thee and me all the heights and depths of our hearts! 'Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' I counsel thee that, as a poor sinner, worthy of hell, thou shouldest go to the Lord Jesus and buy of him 'gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear [before angels and men]; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.' It is certainly pleasant to a proud nature to print, to say, or to hear: 'Thou art certainly an exalted man; thou art far advanced in sanctification!' When to this is added the proud self-deception that a man imagines himself a priest for the atonement of others, he grows giddy in spiritual conceit and becomes boastful beyond measure.

"Oh that the Lord Jesus would either bring you down gently from your deceptive exaltation, or else cast you

down by his divine power, so that personally you may sweetly experience the abundant riches of his grace, and that when you are weighed in the balance of the sanctuary you may not be found wanting!

“For man is worth no more, I fear,  
Than what he doth to God appear.

“I believe that in this letter I have proved myself thy faithful friend; but will leave it with God in the hope that he may bless it so that thou mayest become sober.

“J. JOACHIM ZÜBLIN.

“January 9, 1755.”

Until about 1758 Zubly remained pastor of the church in Charleston, S. C. It was a large congregation, but seems to have been independent of all ecclesiastical relations. Then he removed to Savannah, Ga., where he founded a German church, preaching at the same time for a small Huguenot settlement. For many years he regularly preached German on Sunday morning, French in the afternoon, and English in the evening. He wrote several books, which were published by Christopher Saur, of Germantown. In 1770 the degree of doctor of divinity was conferred upon him by the College of New Jersey. In one of his letters he says that Schlatter had requested him to be “legitimated” by the Coetus, and he seems to intimate an intention of attending one of its meetings; but it does not appear that this laudable intention was ever accomplished.

At the beginning of the Revolution there was no man in Georgia more influential than Dr. Zubly. He had taken a prominent part with the Sons of Liberty, and had preached an eloquent sermon in their behalf before the Provincial Congress assembled in Savannah. On the 4th

of September, 1775, he was selected, with four others, to represent the colony of Georgia in the Continental Congress. He declined to accept the appointment unless his congregation gave its consent. A committee was then sent to consult with the people, and they finally agreed "to spare their minister for a time for the good of the common cause."

It is evident that Dr. Zubly's standpoint was not understood. Though he had strenuously resisted the tyrannical measures of the British ministry he never favored separation from the mother country. In his "Reply" to Paine's "Common Sense" occurs the following sentence, which sufficiently indicates the nature of his political sentiments: "The author looks upon an entire separation not as a last remedy, but as a new and dangerous disease; and earnestly prayeth that America, in that connection, may soon and forever enjoy that constitution and freedom which her representatives so justly claim."

For about four months Dr. Zubly occupied a seat in the Continental Congress; but it soon became evident that his sentiments were objectionable to the majority. Early in 1776, when the question of independence was debated, Samuel Chase, of Maryland, rose in his seat and publicly accused him of treasonable correspondence with Sir James Wright, colonial governor of Georgia. Whether such correspondence was actually held it may now be hard to determine; but it shows the temper of the times that even prior to the Declaration of Independence communication with a British official could be construed as treasonable. Soon afterward Dr. Zubly left Congress and returned home for the purpose of using his influence against separation from the mother country. He must, however, soon have discovered that he had mistaken the signs of the times. His popularity vanished, and he was treated



with great harshness. In 1777 he was banished from Savannah, with the loss of half his estate. When the royal government was for a time established in Georgia he returned to his charge in Savannah, and there remained till his death, which occurred July 23, 1781. After his death there was a reaction in popular sentiment; and two of the streets of Savannah—Joachim and Zubly—still bear his name. The church which he founded is known as the Independent Presbyterian Church.

Though Dr. Zubly was undoubtedly the most eminent of the independent ministers, there were others who enjoyed more than local reputation and influence. That there were so many of them was due in great measure to the Coetus itself, which made no serious efforts to extend its borders beyond the region which Schlatter had traversed. It is said, indeed, that neither men nor means were at hand for such a work; but we cannot help thinking that a single strong man, laboring in Schlatter's spirit, might have accomplished wonders.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE PIETISTS.

THE neglected condition of many churches, especially in Maryland, gave occasion to a movement for their relief. Though this movement subsequently assumed a form which had not been contemplated by its originators, it occupies a prominent place in the history of the Reformed Church of this period. At first confined to the Reformed Church, it finally extended beyond these limits and thus gave rise to an important religious denomination. In order that this important movement may be understood it is necessary to present a brief sketch of the man who has been recognized as its leader.

Philip William Otterbein was born June 3, 1726, at Dillenburg, in Nassau, Germany, and died in Baltimore, Md., October 17, 1813. He belonged to a family in which the ministry might almost be said to have become hereditary; for his father and grandfather had been Reformed ministers, and five of his brothers assumed the sacred office.

The type of religious life which prevailed in Dillenburg may be described as Pietistic, but not mystical. The Otterbeins belonged to the class who at an earlier date would have been termed "die Feinen." They laid great stress on the cultivation of personal religious experience, but were at the same time profoundly attached to the confessions of their church.

At Herborn, near Dillenburg, there was a celebrated school, in which Olevianus had once been a teacher. Here the sons of the Otterbein family were educated; but they no doubt enjoyed additional literary advantages. They seem to have been well trained, and one of them, at least, became an eminent author.

When Philip William Otterbein had completed his theological course he was ordained to the ministry, and for a short time served as vicar at Ockersdorf. In joining the little company of ministers that accompanied Schlatter he was no doubt actuated by the purest motives; and his whole subsequent career indicates that his highest object in life was to be instrumental in saving the souls of men.

Otterbein's work in the Reformed Church was very successful. From 1752 to 1774 he successively held pastorates at Lancaster, Tulpehocken, Frederick, Md., and York, Pa. In 1770-71 he visited his relatives in Germany; but his people in York refused to give him up, and at their request the church was supplied by members of Coetus. In Lancaster and Frederick new churches were built during his pastorate; but though there are traditions of disagreement at these places, any minister who has built a church will have no difficulty in appreciating the conditions. That he was regarded as more Pietistic than some of his brethren we do not doubt; but there was no conflict. As a preacher he was earnest and persuasive; but his voice was weak, and he was never a popular orator. It was his amiable disposition and transparent sincerity that gained him the affection of the people.

In 1774 Otterbein received a call from the Second Reformed Church of the city of Baltimore. The history of this congregation had been discouraging. As early as 1750 there had been a Reformed church in Baltimore, which seems to have been irregularly supplied until 1757,

when John Christopher Faber was elected pastor. Faber was a man of some culture; but his preaching was not generally acceptable, and it was asserted by his opponents that he lacked a proper appreciation of the sanctity of his office. In 1770 Faber's unpopularity became so great that a part of the congregation earnestly demanded his resignation or removal. This party was greatly pleased with the preaching of a man named Benedict Schwob or Schwope.<sup>1</sup> He had been an elder in St. Benjamin's Church, near Westminster, Md., and was very imperfectly educated. In those days it was not unusual for ruling elders to occupy the pulpit in the absence of a regular minister, and it was probably in this way that Mr. Schwope became a popular exhorter. He applied to the Coetus for ordination, and it is a remarkable fact that, notwithstanding the standing rule, the application was granted. In the annual report occurs the following passage: "The want of faithful teachers, especially in Maryland, induces us to accept as our brother every one who may become a worthy laborer in building up and advancing the kingdom of God. We hope this of Mr. Schwope, and therefore trust that the Reverend Fathers will not be surprised at our action, but will rather approve it, especially as we seek nothing thereby but the salvation of souls and the honor of our God."

How the matter was regarded in Holland appears from the following paragraph in a letter from the fathers, dated January 12, 1773:

"Concerning the ordination of Domine Schwope we will say nothing, inasmuch as Maryland does not fall within our jurisdiction; but we would earnestly warn you hereafter not to admit men to the ministry unless they have been properly recommended by us."

<sup>1</sup> The name was variously written, even by its owner. No doubt it was originally *Schwab*.



The party in the Reformed church of Baltimore which favored Mr. Schwope believed itself in the majority and made an attempt to remove Mr. Faber, which proved unsuccessful. The defeated party then withdrew and built a small church, which was for a time supplied by Mr. Schwope. Both parties appealed to Coetus, and for several years the minutes are burdened with accounts of their troubles.<sup>1</sup> Once it was agreed that both pastors should retire, and Faber removed from Baltimore to Taneytown; but as Schwope did not immediately withdraw, the old church declared themselves released from the agreement, and elected Mr. Wallauer, who had just arrived from Germany. For this act they were sharply reprimanded by Coetus.

The seceding body now extended a call to Otterbein, but he at first declined it on account of the disorganized condition of the congregation. Finally he expressed his willingness to accept if Coetus should give its consent. The matter was considered at length at the meeting held in Lancaster in 1773; but as the Coetus still hoped to reunite the two congregations it was declared that it would be better for some other minister to undertake the task. The elders of both parties then extended a call to Hendel, who was Otterbein's brother-in-law and most intimate friend. The old church, however, refused to ratify the action of its representatives, and the seceding party evidently felt justified in renewing its call to Mr. Otterbein, who finally accepted it. The old church protested, and presented testimonials in favor of Mr. Wallauer; but the Coetus referred the whole matter to Holland, which seems to have been a good way of laying it indefinitely on the table. In the succeeding year Otterbein's call to Baltimore was regularly confirmed, and

<sup>1</sup> See article on "Otterbein and the Reformed Church," "Reformed Quarterly Review," October, 1884.

the Coetus expressed its satisfaction at learning that "his labors are blest and the opposing party cease from strife." In 1784 the Coetus resolved that "inasmuch as reunion is not to be expected, both congregations be retained and recognized as congregations connected with Coetus, so long as they remain faithful to the doctrines and customs of the Reformed Church."

There are certain facts connected with Otterbein's acceptance of the call to Baltimore which, we think, have not received the attention which they deserve. Let us relate them as briefly as possible.

In 1771 Francis Asbury, the pioneer of American Methodism, arrived in this country. As is well known, he did not propose to establish a separate religious denomination; but, in furtherance of the great movement inaugurated by Wesley and his coadjutors, he founded societies whose sole condition of membership was "a desire to flee the wrath to come and be saved from sin." The sacraments were not administered in these Methodist societies, but the class system was introduced, and some of the leaders afterward became earnest Methodist ministers.

In 1772 Asbury made the acquaintance of Schwope<sup>1</sup> and found in him a sympathetic soul. They agreed "to promote the settling of Mr. Otterbein in Baltimore," and Asbury wrote him a letter urging him to come. Together they laid a plan, very similar to that of the Methodists, for introduction into the German churches; and, according to Asbury's diary, it was proposed to present it to the Coetus for general adoption.

That the plan appeared fascinating to Otterbein we can readily understand. It was based on the old idea of the *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, which had been familiar to the Reformed people of Germany since the days of Jean de

<sup>1</sup> Drury's "Life of Otterbein," p. 162.

Labadie. In many churches of the Lower Rhine there were societies whose members regarded themselves as having attained a superior degree of spiritual enlightenment, and who frequently met for mutual edification. In many instances these societies had accomplished much good, and, as the state was careful to preserve the external organization of the church, it was but rarely that they resulted in schism.

The plan proposed by Mr. Asbury appeared to furnish an answer to what was then a burning question, especially in Maryland. The lack of ministers was very great, and the people were everywhere clamoring for religious instruction. In some parts of Pennsylvania, under the fostering care of the church of Holland, the condition of affairs was gradually improving; but in Maryland it was deplorable, and sometimes seemed to be hopeless. The only practicable expedient appeared to be to enlist the laity in the devotional work of the church. Otterbein and Schwope accordingly organized class-meetings in their respective churches, and appointed "leaders" who were to aid the pastor in his work. Within a few months the class system was introduced into a considerable number of churches in Maryland and southern Pennsylvania. The classes met once or twice during the week, and on Sunday a public meeting was conducted by the leaders. In the work of organization Otterbein and Schwope were assisted by several of the most prominent ministers of the Reformed Church. Semi-annual conferences were held, at which reports were presented by the several societies or classes.

All this fully appears from the minutes of five of these conferences, which were in 1882 discovered by the author among the records of St. Benjamin's Church, near Westminster, Md. These minutes begin with what appears to have been the second meeting, in 1774, and end abruptly



in 1776. The movement was at this time entirely confined to the Reformed Church, and included, we believe, all the Reformed churches in Maryland except the First Church of Baltimore and Mr. Faber's charge at Taneytown. Several important churches in Pennsylvania were also represented. The ministers who attended these conferences, besides Otterbein and Schwope, were Jacob Weimer, of Hagerstown, F. L. Henop, of Frederick, Daniel Wagner, of York, Pa., and William Hendel, of Tulpehocken. They called themselves "United Ministers," but not in any exclusive sense. They were among the most prominent members of Coetus, and it is evident that at that time the "New Lights" were decidedly in the ascendant in that body, though they may not have been the most numerous.

Whether the conferences were continued after 1776 we do not know. It appears that soon after this time certain peculiarities began to appear which are familiar from the early days of Methodism. Among those who became interested in the movement were men who were not connected with the Reformed Church and had no intention of becoming identified with it; and Martin Boehm, who had been a Mennonite, became one of the leaders. In 1783 George A. Gueting, who had been one of the class-leaders, and who had studied theology with Otterbein, was ordained to the ministry by the Coetus. He was of a more enthusiastic temperament than Mr. Otterbein, whose disposition was more quiet and reflective. Under Gueting's direction were held the "great meetings" on the Antietam, which still live in popular tradition.

Otterbein, like Zinzendorf and Wesley, appears to have held that Christians of various denominations might participate in higher unity without renouncing their original ecclesiastical relations. He therefore continued to take a profound interest in the movement which he had helped



to inaugurate, but was at the same time careful to remain in regular standing in the Coetus of the Reformed Church. He was also favorable to the Methodists, and in 1784 assisted Dr. Coke in the ordination of Mr. Asbury. In the same year he was present at the Coetus held in Lancaster, Pa., and in 1785 was excused for absence on account of being on a missionary journey to the vacant churches of Virginia.

For thirty-nine years Mr. Otterbein was pastor of the Second Reformed Church of Baltimore. During all this period he was in full membership in the Coetus, though he engaged in evangelistic efforts which extended beyond the limits of the Reformed Church. Though he was recognized as what would at a later time have been called "an extreme new-measure man," the Coetus and Synod never by word or act condemned his course. In the minutes of Coetus he is frequently mentioned in complimentary terms, and once, at least, the Dutch Synods made a special appropriation in his behalf, in token of their confidence and esteem. The most influential members of the Coetus had themselves been trained under pietistic influences and were not inclined to turn aside from a man who had been for years their leader.

It has been asserted that while Otterbein was a member of Coetus the congregation which he served was independent. The arguments by which this is made to appear are certainly insufficient, and the fact is plain from the minutes of Coetus that the two churches in Baltimore occupied precisely the same position. Both sent annual statistical reports, which were incorporated in the minutes without note or comment. There were in those days many congregations which declared themselves independent; but the act became well known and was generally accompanied by some sort of *pronunciamento*. In Otter-

bein's church no such action was taken, and there can be no doubt that its position was favored by a large party in the Coetus. In some parts of Pennsylvania the Coetus itself became unpopular on account of its sympathy for the Pietists. Gradually, however, the church which Otterbein served became more deeply interested in its evangelistic movements than in its denominational relations, so that after the death of its pastor it became possible to alienate it from the Reformed Church.

When it became evident that a life which was foreign to the Reformed Church was in course of development many ministers and churches gradually withdrew from this well-meant evangelistic movement. Others, however, became more energetic in its defense; and among these ministers the most pronounced was Gueting. He rarely attended Synod, and seemed utterly indifferent to its counsels and commands. In 1804 he was accused of disorderly conduct and was excluded from Synod by a vote of 20 to 17. At the same time the Synod formally declared that he "might at any time be restored on giving evidence of true reformation." There can be no doubt that Gueting's exclusion "drove the wedge of separation"; but it is hard to see how the Synod could with proper self-respect have acted otherwise, and it is more than likely that Mr. Gueting did not desire different action. He became an active minister in the church of the United Brethren in Christ. Mr. Otterbein remained connected with the Synod, and was in 1806 present at its annual meeting in Baltimore. He was, however, warmly attached to the men with whom he had labored, and recognizing the fact that a new denomination was unavoidable, one of his last official acts was to give it a settled ministry by the rite of ordination.

For many years the new denomination was popularly

known as New Reformed, though its official title was "United Brethren in Christ." The number of Reformed ministers who joined this body was not large, but in Maryland especially it occupied places which the Reformed Church had neglected, and gathered many of its scattered members. So far as the Reformed Church was concerned it must be conceded that Otterbein's well-meant movement did not accomplish its original purpose; and however excellent may have been its results in other directions, its general effect on the Reformed churches was for a time depressing. Pietism came to be regarded as equivalent with separatism; and in their efforts to avoid one extreme good men sometimes were carried to another. The church, however, remained faithful to its standards, and though its type of piety became less demonstrative it was believed to be no less genuine and sincere.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE LAST YEARS OF THE COETUS.

DURING the War of the Revolution the Coetus for several years failed to hold its annual meeting, on account of the disturbed state of the country; and the number of extant historical documents dating from this period is small. In 1775 the Reformed and Lutherans united in the publication of an appeal to the German citizens of New York and North Carolina, urging them to support the measures of Congress and the cause of American freedom. In this appeal the Germans of Pennsylvania are represented as doing everything to sustain the measures of Congress, in organizing militia companies and corps of Yeagers ready to march whenever and wherever commanded.<sup>1</sup> Several prominent military officers were members of the Reformed Church; and General Nicholas Herkimer, "the hero of Oriskany," belonged to an old Reformed family of New York. More celebrated, however, is Baron Frederick William von Steuben, who was very decided in his attachment to the Reformed Church, and was, after the war, a ruling elder of the Nassau Street Church, New York. After his death his aide, General North, erected a tablet to his memory in the church of which he had been a member.

<sup>1</sup> Seidensticker's "First Century of German Printing," p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Abraham Rosenkrantz, pastor of the Nassau Street Church, New York; was his brother-in-law.



The ministers connected with Coetus appear to have been, generally, earnest advocates of independence. In their official communications with Holland they frequently speak of the British as "the enemy"; and days of fasting and prayer were appointed in accordance with the recommendations of Congress. On some the pastors chose texts which sufficiently expressed their political sentiments. At the beginning of the war the Rev. John H. Weikel got into trouble by preaching on the text, "Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished." Rev. C. D. Weyberg, of Philadelphia, was imprisoned for his patriotism, and his church was occupied by British soldiers. On the first Sunday after his liberation he preached on the words, "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled." The text had a certain appropriateness, for the church had been greatly injured by the British occupation. The Rev. J. C. A. Helffenstein was pastor at Lancaster when the Hessian prisoners were kept there, and it frequently became his duty to preach to them. "On one occasion," says Dr. Harbaugh, "he preached on the text, 'Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money.' Not long afterward he chose the words, 'If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed,' when the excitement became so great that it was deemed prudent to accompany him home with a guard. Once he preached to the American soldiers, on their departure to the scene of conflict, from the words, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?'"

Several other German Reformed ministers are entitled to patriotic honors. Schlatter, it will be remembered, was imprisoned for his sympathy with the American cause. Hendel was accompanied by armed men when he preached in Lykens Valley, the guards standing at the door to pro-

tect him from the Indians, who had become hostile through British influence. The Rev. John Conrad Bucher, who had been a military officer during the French and Indian War, frequently preached to the soldiers in camp, if he was not a regular chaplain.

That there were some ministers and members who took the opposite side is not surprising. We have already referred to the unfortunate fate of Dr. Zubly, and can here only mention the Rev. John Michael Kern, of New York, who was hardly less eminent. At the beginning of the Revolution he became an enthusiastic loyalist, believing that in America neither church nor state was prepared for independence. He emigrated to Nova Scotia, where he remained until long after the close of the war. In 1788 he removed to Pennsylvania and settled in Bucks County, where he died in the same year. He had sacrificed his all, and, poor and heart-sick, he came to lay his bones among his own people.

The years immediately succeeding the Revolution are not historically important. The members of the Coetus, it is true, occupied a position which for local dignity and influence has never been equaled in the history of the Reformed Church. There were, however, few signs of growth or advancement. Every year the minister received his proportion of the Holland stipend, amounting to nearly two hundred dollars; and as this fact was well known the people did not greatly exert themselves to contribute to his support.

The condition of the church was peaceful, but there was no consciousness of a special mission. The connection with Holland, which had been at first a blessing, now became a burden. It was perhaps but natural that some of the beneficiaries of the stipend should desire its continuance; but there were others who regarded it as humiliat-

ing to remain participants of a foreign charity. As early as 1771, when the Dutch churches of New York and New Jersey were about to sever their connection with Holland, they invited the German churches to unite with them in the formation of a Synod; but the Coetus declined to enter into the arrangement on the ground of their affection for the fathers in Holland, who had showed them so much kindness. It is evident, however, that the recent conflicts in the Reformed Dutch Church, between the Coetus and the Conferentie, were not without influence in leading them to this decision. As the historical identity of the two branches of the church was generally recognized, it is possible that the necessity of organic unity was not fully appreciated.

The relations of the German Reformed and Lutheran Churches during this period were intimate and cordial. There were always certain peculiarities of ritual and observance by which the religious services of the two churches were distinguished,<sup>1</sup> but it must be confessed that after the first generation more important distinctions became very obscure.

That the sentiment of the church in Germany was very similar is sufficiently evident. The movement which finally resulted in the union of the evangelical churches had already begun, and the writers of the period were disposed to reduce the differences between the churches to a minimum. Thus we find Stilling saying, in his reply to Sul-

<sup>1</sup> "If a Pennsylvania farmer had at this time been asked to point out the difference between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches he would probably have said: 'In the Lord's Prayer the Reformed say, *Unser Vater*, and the Lutherans say, *Vater unser*; and further on in the same prayer the Lutherans say, *Erlöse uns von dem Uebel*, and the Reformed, *Erlöse uns von dem Bösen*.' He might also have referred to the fact that the Lutherans generally use unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper; and if particularly well instructed he might have mentioned the variation in the division of the ten commandments which is found in the catechisms of the two churches."—"Historic Manual," p. 264.



zer:<sup>1</sup> "You know very well that the Reformed and Lutherans originally differed only in their views concerning the Lord's Supper and free will, and that these differences have now passed away; for the fact that the Lutherans still pray *Vater unser*, and use unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper, does not affect the unity of the faith." It appears, therefore, that the development of the "denominational consciousness" belongs to a later period.

Union churches were at first exceptional, but they now became very numerous. Indeed, instances were not rare when the denomination which was first in the field freely presented one half of its real estate to a newly organized congregation of the other confession. There are legends of rivalry and dispossession, it is true, but these refer to exceptional conditions and generally belong to an earlier period. As a general thing the people liked the arrangement. The ministers preached alternately to what was practically the same congregation, and their salaries were paid out of a common treasury. There is, of course, a point of view from which it is pleasant to see two congregations worshipping harmoniously in the same church, but experience has proved that this arrangement does not lead to real prosperity, and the Synods of both churches have consequently expressed their disapproval of the continued erection of union churches.

In some instances, where both congregations were weak and poor, a single pastor was called, and the united congregation was known as "Evangelical" or "Protestant." These congregations became the special prey of independent vagrants, and many of them were finally lost to the churches which they originally represented.

In 1787 an attempt was made in South Carolina to establish an ecclesiastical body, which was officially known

<sup>1</sup> "Wahrheit und Liebe," p. 227.



as *Corpus Evangelicum* or *Unio Ecclesiastica*. It consisted of five Lutheran and two Reformed ministers, together with delegates from fifteen churches. The union was short-lived and is principally interesting as anticipating by thirty years the Evangelical Church Union of Prussia, which is founded on similar principles.<sup>1</sup>

The fraternal intimacy of the two leading German denominations encouraged their most prominent men to engage in an important educational movement. Hitherto a few young men had been instructed in advanced studies by Dr. Helmuth, in Philadelphia, and by Dr. Gros, in New York; but now it was believed that the time had come for the establishment of a literary institution of advanced grade.

In the absence of direct proof it is impossible to say with certainty who was the first to suggest the founding of a German college. It is, however, plain that the honor of first taking active measures in its behalf must be divided between four ministers: the Rev. Drs. Helmuth, Weyberg, Hendel, and Muhlenberg (the younger). Helmuth and Weyberg were at that time respectively pastors of the Lutheran and Reformed churches of Philadelphia, and Muhlenberg and Hendel of those of Lancaster. They were men of great ability and influence, and were withal intimate personal friends. Helmuth, it will be remembered, expressed his affection for Weyberg in a beautiful poem which, in later years, he wrote on the occasion of his death.

There is abundant evidence that these eminent men were profoundly grieved by the low state of education and culture among the people in whose interest they were

<sup>1</sup> The constitution and minutes of the *Corpus Evangelicum* were translated by Dr. Hazelius, and appear at length in Bernheim's "History of the Lutheran Church in the Carolinas."

called to labor. In a contemporary document Dr. Weyberg exclaims: "Is there no hope for the Germans in America? Must they forever remain mere hewers of wood and drawers of water?"

In the work of founding a new college the founders secured the coöperation of some of the most eminent citizens of Pennsylvania. Benjamin Franklin, who was at that time the president of the Executive Council of the State, was the largest individual contributor to its endowment. Among the trustees were such men as Thomas Mifflin, Benjamin Rush, Thomas McKean, and Peter Muhlenberg. The legislature granted the college ten thousand acres of land in the western part of the State, together with the public storehouse and two lots of ground in the borough of Lancaster.

The new institution was opened with much ceremony on the 6th of June, 1787. The Lutheran Ministerium and the Reformed Coetus were both in session in Lancaster at that time, and this fact secured the attendance of a large number of ministers. Benjamin Franklin was present,<sup>1</sup> and in his honor the new institution was named Franklin College.

The first president of the college was Dr. Henry Ernst Muhlenberg, the eminent botanist, who was at that time pastor of the Lutheran church of Lancaster; and the Reformed pastor, Dr. Hendel, served as vice-president. In the succeeding year the presidency was accepted by the Rev. F. W. Melsheimer, an eminent scientist, who has been called the "father of American entomology." The faculty was well chosen and there were many students, but the institution was not prosperous. It was found neces-

<sup>1</sup> Hector St.-Jean de Crèveœur, a French writer, has preserved a record of this fact in his book of travels, "*Voyage dans la Haute Pennsylvanie*," in which he states that he accompanied the venerable Franklin on his journey to Lancaster on this occasion.

sary to divide the college into two departments, which in fact became rival schools. After two years the finances were found to be in so unfavorable a condition that the operations of the college were greatly contracted, and Franklin College became, at best, a good local academy. The comprehensive plan of the founders had proved a failure.

The causes of this disappointment, though somewhat complicated, are not hard to determine. It now appears evident that in the constitution of the college too many interests were represented. The board of trustees consisted, in equal numbers, of Lutherans, Reformed, and a third element which was supposed to represent the "outside community." In guarding the several constituents there were rules of organization which rendered the board almost unmanageable. No doubt the finances were badly conducted. The land given by the State was at the time utterly unproductive, and it was not until many years afterward that it increased sufficiently in value to furnish a respectable endowment for a literary institution of advanced grade. After the first enthusiastic effort it does not appear that any earnest attempt was made to gather contributions, though the papers were filled with appeals for aid, addressed to no one in particular. In latter days we have learned that this is not the way to secure a college endowment.

That there were disagreements in the faculty and board of trustees is painfully apparent. The Germans became convinced that an effort was to be made to Anglicize them at all hazards. At the formal opening of the college the Rev. Dr. Hutchins—an Episcopal clergyman who had been elected a member of the faculty—delivered an address in which he said: "As the limited capacity of man can very seldom attain excellence in more than one language, the



study of English will consequently demand the principal attention of your children." However innocent such utterances may now appear to have been, it should be remembered that the audience was chiefly composed of Germans whose chief object in establishing a college was to do honor to their language and nationality. Under the circumstances the address manifested a lamentable want of discretion, and may have suggested the remark of a contributor to a Lancaster paper of the day:<sup>1</sup> "The English and Germans cannot work together. The one says Shibboleth, the other Sibboleth."

All these causes no doubt contributed to the same unfortunate result; but we cannot help thinking that they might in time have been overcome. The undertaking was perhaps begun on too large a scale for the time and place; but, above all, the promoters failed to recognize the fact that such a work requires time and patience. They evidently expected the entire German community to share in their enthusiasm, and were grievously disappointed when they were left to struggle alone. Yet we cannot help feeling that if time had been allowed for organic growth the work might even then have proved successful.

During all these years the connection with Holland remained unbroken. That the Dutch Synods were faithful to their trust cannot be doubted; but they had little actual knowledge of the requirements of the church in a new country, and clung tenaciously to ancient precedents. In America the demand for ministers far exceeded the supply; but it was under many restrictions and by special permission only that the Coetus was permitted to admit new members. As early as 1772, however, it assumed the authority of administering the rite of ordination. In

1 "Lancaster Unpartheyische Zeitung," October 5, 1787.



that year Casper Wack, who had been carefully instructed by Dr. Weyberg, was ordained to the ministry, having been licensed to preach two years earlier. He was a most excellent man, and subsequently became a leader of the church; but his ordination was in Holland regarded as a dangerous innovation. Several other young men were ordained in subsequent years, and in 1791 the Coetus took the following action:

“*Resolved*, That the Coetus has the right at all times to examine and ordain those who offer themselves as candidates for the ministry, without asking or waiting for permission to do so from the fathers in Holland.”

At the same meeting it was resolved to continue to send to Holland “a report of the proceedings, accompanied by a suitable explanation, as may be necessary.” This was equivalent to a declaration of independence, as the proceedings were to be sent merely as a matter of courtesy and not for revision. To take this action demanded some courage and self-denial, for it involved a renunciation of the Holland stipend, on which the ministers had greatly depended for financial support. Having taken the first step, the Coetus, however, did not hesitate to take the second. In 1792 Domines Pomp and Hendel were directed to prepare a Synodical constitution. To the letters sent to Holland no answer was returned; and in the succeeding year the Synod held its first meeting at Lancaster, where, by the adoption of the “Synodalordnung,” it became an independent body.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE SYNOD.

THE Synod of the German Reformed Church, which convened for the first time in Lancaster, Pa., on the 27th of April, 1793, was by no means a large or imposing body. Thirteen ministers were present and nine are recorded as absent. It is evident, however, that the number of absentees was actually greater than appears on the minutes. There are no extant statistics, but by piecing together the reports of earlier and later years it is possible to construct a table which may be presumed to be approximately correct. In these early reports the number of families alone is given, but we may safely estimate three communicants to every family. From a statistical table constructed in this way it appears that the Synod numbered in 1793 about one hundred and seventy-eight congregations and fifteen thousand communicants. Of the congregations at least fifty-five were vacant. The number of adherents possibly exceeded forty thousand.

Taking a bird's-eye view of our earliest Synod we find that its churches were scattered through a region extending from the city of New York and northern New Jersey, through Pennsylvania and Maryland, to the valley of Virginia, with several outlying congregations west of the Alleghanies.

The most important congregations in the Synod were

those of Philadelphia and Lancaster, whose pastors—Winckhaus and Hendel—were by common consent recognized as the leaders of the Synod. Next in importance were probably the churches at Germantown, Pa., and Frederick, Md. The Baltimore churches, as we have seen, had been engaged in a controversy which greatly limited their influence. In New York the celebrated Dr. Gros was still pastor of the Nassau Street Church; but he was advanced in years, and his name does not appear on the roll of Synod. In 1796 this church, which was probably suspected of a tendency to independence, was by special action required to signify its approval of the constitution. The chief numerical strength of the church was still to be found in its earliest settlements, between the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers, though there were important charges farther west. Beyond the Alleghanies the only settled pastor was the Rev. John William Weber, who founded many churches in Westmoreland, Fayette, and Armstrong counties, and was the first minister of any denomination to organize a congregation in Pittsburg.<sup>1</sup>

Beyond these limits there was a *terra incognita* which the Synod in a vague way claimed as its missionary ground. As late as 1818 the following note is attached to the statistical report in the minutes of the Synod: "There is a great number of vacant churches in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and also several in the western part of New York, concerning which we have no certain information." In Virginia Bernard F. Willy labored independently; and as early as 1789 Andrew F. Loretz had been sent by the Coetus to North Carolina, where he did excellent work

<sup>1</sup> This congregation still exists as an independent German congregation. It is officially known as the First German United Evangelical-Protestant Church of Pittsburg.

in saving the things which were ready to die. Vacant churches from Nova Scotia to South Carolina called on the Synod to supply them with pastors, but there were none to send. It may at this place be of some interest to mention some of the localities which appealed so earnestly for aid.

Far to the north, in the British province of Nova Scotia, there was a considerable German settlement. It had been founded in 1753 and was about equally composed of Reformed and Lutherans. Brilliant promises had been made to the first settlers by the government, but they were not kept, and in 1754 there was a German revolt, which was promptly suppressed.<sup>1</sup> The Lutherans soon secured pastors, but the Reformed were not so fortunate. As early as 1772 the congregation at Lunenburg appealed to the Coetus to send them a minister. Their application was unsuccessful, and, despairing of obtaining a pastor in any other way, they chose a pious fisherman named Bruin Romcas Comingoe—commonly called Brown—who was ordained by a council of two Presbyterian and two Congregational ministers. He labored faithfully until 1818, always hoping to be relieved by an educated minister of his own church. He was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Moschell, who came directly from Germany. After the resignation of the latter, in 1837, the Reformed churches of Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia—now six in number—united with the Presbyterian Church.

Another of the neglected outposts was Waldoborough, in the State of Maine. At this place a German settlement had been founded as early as 1740. The Lutherans and Reformed had built a union church, and as the Reformed were in the minority it was for many years served by Lutheran pastors, who administered the

<sup>1</sup> "Gentleman's Magazine," vol. xxiv., p. 190.



communion to the Reformed members according to the form which they preferred. German services were maintained until 1850, but the young folks grew up English, and finally the whole congregation passed over to the Congregationalists.<sup>1</sup>

At almost every meeting of Synod there was an appeal for pastors from the German churches of the State of New York. These churches would cheerfully have placed themselves under the care of the Reformed Dutch Church, but that body was not prepared to supply them with German preaching. In a letter to the German Synod in 1803 the Rev. Dr. Livingston acknowledged this fact, and urgently pleaded for pastors to be sent to the vacant German churches; but nothing could be done. A few aged German ministers continued to labor in the valleys of the Hudson and the Mohawk, but when they passed away their places were occupied by ministers of other churches. German Reformed churches have since been founded in New England and New York, but, with one or two exceptions, they are derived from comparatively recent immigration.

In New Jersey disintegration proceeded even more rapidly than in New York. The churches had become English and were inadequately supplied with preaching in the language which they preferred. Casper Wack preached in the churches of the German Valley until 1809, but after his resignation the congregations at Lebanon and Fox Hill, in 1815, notwithstanding the protest of the Synod, passed over to the Presbyterians. In the same year the congregation at Rockaway was regularly dismissed by Synod to the Reformed Dutch Church. The old church at Amwell, Hunterdon County, remained in connection with the Re-

<sup>1</sup> A very interesting account of this settlement appears in successive numbers of the "*Deutsche Pionier*."

formed Synod until 1818, but then became Presbyterian. The church in Warren County, popularly known as the "Straw" Church, was for a time supplied from Easton, Pa. It was, however, a union church, and after a few years the Reformed congregation disbanded and the church became entirely Lutheran.

In the South the condition of the Reformed churches was very discouraging. In Virginia, during the colonial period, many congregations had conformed to the Episcopal Church "as by law established," and at a later date others were carried away by the movement which Otterbein helped to inaugurate. At one time it seemed as if the Reformed Church in all that region was about to become extinct; but after 1800 the Rev. John Brown was settled there, and it is to his self-denying labors that the preservation of the Reformed Church in the valley of Virginia is chiefly due. For many years he was the only Reformed minister in that State, except the pastor of the Shepherdstown charge.

To extend our view over the entire Southern field would require more space than we can command. It may be said, in a general way, that though the Reformed Church has a prosperous Classis in the central part of North Carolina, it no longer holds its earliest settlements in that State. In New Berne, for instance, which was founded by Swiss people as early as 1710, not a trace of the Reformed Church remains. The present membership of the Reformed churches in North Carolina is chiefly composed of the descendants of people who removed to that State from Pennsylvania about the middle of the last century. Until after Bouquet's expedition in 1756, it is well known, the country west of the Alleghanies was not open to settlement and the course of emigration was southward. The settlement in North Carolina was large and compact, so that at one time, it is

said, in extensive districts even the negroes spoke Pennsylvania German. It was difficult to maintain these congregations, so far away from the ecclesiastical center; but through the labors of such men as Andrew Loretz and George Boger they were kept alive until the church was better prepared to supply their wants.

In South Carolina, and farther south, most of the pioneers had come directly from the fatherland, and there was little direct communication with the church in Pennsylvania. From 1739 until about 1775 the Rev. Christian Theus was pastor of Reformed churches on the Congaree. He is often mentioned in the annals of the times, and was undoubtedly an excellent man. During his pastorate he was brought into conflict with a fanatical sect known as the Weberites, by whose extravagances the work among the Germans was greatly discredited.<sup>1</sup> We have already referred to the attempted union with the Lutherans, known as the *Corpus Evangelicum*. After the death of Theus the South Carolina churches were for many years vacant, or supplied by unauthorized itinerants, until at last, in 1814, the Synod was induced to license William Hauck, who for some years supplied eight churches situated in the "Forks" between the Broad and Saluda rivers. He was entirely uneducated and was otherwise unfitted for the place. In 1736 he was suspended from the ministry. He had, however, previously removed to North Carolina, and finally concluded his course in Cape Girardeau County, Mo. With him the Reformed churches of South Carolina ceased to exist.

In the early minutes of the Synod there are frequent references to churches on the French Broad River in Tennessee and in Kentucky. Concerning these churches we have no certain knowledge. We have reason to sup-

<sup>1</sup> Bernheim, p. 203.



pose that they were "union" churches in the broadest sense, which were never in full communion with the Reformed Church.

From this general view of the condition of the Reformed Church we can form some conception of the difficulties which confronted the Synod at the time of its organization. Except in the oldest settlements in Pennsylvania there were no evidences of prosperity. Indeed, it is not too much to say that thirty years passed away before the fruits of independent life began to appear. There were none of the institutions which are now regarded as essential to success in the work of the church, except a Fund for the Relief of the Widows of Deceased Ministers, and this fund was so small that it was of little importance. There was no literary or theological institution, no board of missions, no church paper. The church was clamoring for pastors; but the supply of educated ministers from Europe was cut off, and, with the exception of two or three who had been educated in the institutions of other churches, there were no candidates who were properly qualified to assume the sacred office. From this point of view there is hardly a period in the history of the Reformed Church which is more discouraging than the one which extends from 1793 to 1825.

The most important act of the Synod of 1793 was the adoption of the "Synodalordnung," or Rules of Synod. In the preamble to this document it is said to have been established by "all the Evangelical Reformed churches of Pennsylvania and certain neighboring States"; but in the first article it is declared that the body which has hitherto been known as the Coetus of Pennsylvania shall hereafter be entitled the "Synod of the Reformed German Church in the United States of America." Some of the rules then adopted have become obsolete, but others



are found in the present constitution of the church. Ministers who had been sent to America by the Synods of Holland, or who might hereafter be sent, were entitled to membership; those who came from other parts of Europe were required to present certificates of ordination and testimonials of good conduct. For one year all ministers received from a foreign country remained honorary members, without a seat or vote. Candidates for the ministry were required to be well grounded in the ancient languages, except in special cases when the applicant was more than twenty-five years of age and was otherwise well qualified for the office. Delegated elders were then, as now, entitled to a seat and vote in Synod, except that elders representing vacant charges had no vote. The powers of the president were carefully guarded, but he seems to have been a more influential personage than he is at present. It was not only made his duty to reprimand delinquents, but under certain circumstances to suspend them from office until the next meeting of Synod. Pastors were required to present annual reports of their ministry, which were read in open Synod; and the elders were then questioned, not only formally, but minutely. At every session of the Synod a private meeting was to be held, at which the orthodoxy of the sermons which had been preached during the convention was discussed, and private difficulties between the members considered and settled.

In 1800 an additional series of rules was adopted, by which the Synod was made to consist of ordained ministers, licentiates, and catechists. Catechists, like licentiates of the present day, were not permitted to administer the sacraments. They were frequently directed to supply vacant congregations, but were kept under strict supervision and might at any time be discharged. They were,

in fact, candidates for the ministry, who looked forward to promotion. Licentiates were authorized to administer the sacraments and could serve congregations; but their license was annually renewed, and at the meetings of Synod they were literally required to occupy back seats. While they remained licentiates they could withdraw from the ministry without incurring censure; but after a minister had received ordination it was universally held that he was bound to continue in the work until the end of his life. The constitution as a whole referred to the ministry alone. The time for a general constitution for the Reformed Church in the United States had not yet come.

The next important undertaking of the new Synod was the preparation of a hymn-book. The book which had been hitherto in use was known as the "Marburg," from the place of its original publication in Germany. It had been several times reprinted by Christopher Saur, of Germantown, and was in this form regarded as one of the finest examples of the typography of that celebrated printer. Besides the Psalms and Hymns, it contained the Heidelberg Catechism, Morning and Evening Prayers, Gospel and Epistle Lessons, and an account of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Though Saur's publication had evidently been a private speculation it was extensively used in the churches; but during the Revolution the publishing house was broken up, and the book became scarce. The style of Lobwasser's version of the Psalms had, moreover, become antiquated, and many stanzas were no longer sung. The Synod, therefore, in 1793 adopted the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That a hymn-book be prepared, of which the psalms shall be taken from Lobwasser and Spreng's improved version, and that the Palatinate hymn-book

shall form the basis of the hymns, with this difference only: that some unintelligible hymns be exchanged for better ones."

The committee on the hymn-book consisted of Domines Hendel, Helffrich, Blumer, Wagner, Pauli, and Mann. Dr. Hendel was, however, so prominent in the work that the resultant volume was often called "Hendel's hymn-book." It was actually a new collection, and, considering the times, was a very creditable production. The preface says: "We have chosen the most edifying and best-known hymns in the Marburg and Palatinate hymn-books, composed by Joachim Neander, Friedrich Adolph Lampe, Casper Zollikofer, and other godly men among the Protestants. To these we have added a number of edifying spiritual songs taken from hymn-books recently published in various parts of Germany. The meters are arranged throughout according to the Palatinate hymn-book." It was perhaps an advantage that the collection followed an earlier model, as it thus in great measure escaped from the rationalism which was then current in Germany.

The Heidelberg Catechism had been so frequently reprinted in America that at this time no new edition appears to have been demanded. A reprint was, however, issued in 1795 by Steiner & Kämmerer, of Philadelphia. The first edition published in Pennsylvania in the English language bears the imprint of Starck & Lange, Hanover, Pa., 1810.

Though the organization of the Synod was attended by many discouragements, it was not without encouraging features. At the first meeting William Hendel, Jr., a son of the Lancaster pastor, was ordained. He had been graduated at Columbia College, New York, and had been instructed in theology by Drs. Gros and Liv-



ingston. He was a man of ability and culture, who remained faithful to the church in the most trying period of its history. In 1794 Dr. Gros presented for examination, licensure, and ordination his favorite pupil, Philip Milledoler, also a graduate of Columbia College, who was in later life equally revered in the German and Dutch churches, and was for some time regarded as a personal bond of union between them. At the same meeting Christian L. Becker, John Henry Hoffmeier, and Lebrecht L. Hinsch were received from Germany; and John Gobrecht, a son of the Rev. John Christopher Gobrecht, of Hanover, and George Geistweit, who had been prepared by Dr. F. L. Herman, were admitted to the ministry. These men infused new life into the organization, and soon shared with the most eminent surviving members of the Coetus in the dignity of leadership.

Pastors now began to instruct candidates for the ministry. They were no doubt actuated by a laudable desire to supply the pressing wants of the church, but it is not too much to say that in many instances the instruction conveyed was very unsatisfactory. The candidates had little preparatory training, and the preceptors were ordinarily already burdened with pastoral labor. Drs. Helfenstein and Herman, and possibly a few others, who instructed many students, conducted a regular course of instruction in the classic languages as well as in theology; but in some instances the sole privilege of the candidate was to read such books in his preceptor's library as happened to please him, and to preach on Sunday in some outlying congregation. In dogmatic theology the writings of Stapfer and Mursina were regarded as certain guides, and in church history Mosheim was an infallible authority. The length of the period of instruction had not been determined, and there can be no doubt that can-



didates were admitted to the ministry whose preparation was of the slightest.

The immediate results of private theological instruction were encouraging. There was a rapid increase in the number of ministers, and charges which had long been vacant were once more supplied with the means of grace. In some instances, no doubt, the ministers who had sprung directly from the people were more familiar with their requirements than the more learned pastors of an earlier day. Sons of ministers frequently presented themselves for ordination, and as they were unusually intelligent they naturally became men of influence. Among these, besides those already mentioned, we may name Samuel Weyberg, Thomas Pomp, John T. Faber, Jr., John Helffrich, and the younger Wacks and Helffensteins.

Reformed ministers now began to explore the great West. Samuel Weyberg was a great traveler. After laboring in North Carolina for ten years he removed to Missouri, and in 1803 preached, in Cape Girardeau County, the first sermon delivered by a Protestant minister west of the Mississippi River.<sup>1</sup> In the same year the Rev. Jacob Christman began to preach in Warren County, O. In the following year that truly apostolic man, the Rev. John Jacob la Rose, removed from Guilford County, N. C., to Montgomery County, O., and, engaging extensively in missionary journeys, founded many churches in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky. Before 1825 thirteen Reformed ministers had settled west of the Alleghanies.

As early as 1793 the Synod had suggested that whenever a number of ministers—not less than three—resided at so great a distance from the center of the church as to render it inconvenient to attend the meetings of Synod, it was competent for them to organize a Classis, to be rep-

<sup>1</sup> Harbaugh's "Lives," vol. iii., p. 46.

resented in Synod by one or more delegates. It does not appear that this suggestion was accepted, but in 1819 the Synod divided itself into eight districts or Classes. Their first meeting was held on the fourth Sunday after Easter, 1820. These Classes possessed local jurisdiction, in due subordination to the Synod, and at their annual meetings elected the delegates of which the Synod was composed. The Synod, however, reserved the right of calling all its members to meet in general convention whenever it deemed it advisable to do so, and for some years it refused to grant to the Classes the privilege of conferring the rite of ordination.

With the establishment of the Classis the organization of the German Reformed Church in this country was completed. If the Reformed Church owes its Synods to Zwingli, the Classes are derived from Calvin and the church of France. They were introduced into Holland and the Rhine Provinces of Germany at least as early as 1571, and, whether known as Classes or Presbyteries, have everywhere been recognized as of fundamental importance to the Reformed system of government. Their introduction into the German Reformed Church of this country, therefore, appropriately marks the time of its awakening to the nature of its mission, and of an earnest determination to labor for its accomplishment.

It is only by taking a position at the end of this period and looking backward that we become convinced that there was real progress. The statistics for 1825 are exceptionally incomplete; but by filling out the blanks from the reports of the date in question it appears that the number of ministers had increased from twenty-two to eighty-seven, not to mention nine pastors who belonged to a schismatic Synod. The number of communicants connected with the mother Synod was 23,291. As the Classis

of Western Pennsylvania, with thirteen ministers and about eighty congregations, had in the previous year resolved itself into the Synod of Ohio, it may perhaps be taken for granted that between 1793 and 1825 the membership of the church had more than doubled.

These statistics appear to indicate an encouraging degree of prosperity; but the progress of the church was, unfortunately, more apparent than real. Important problems remained unsolved, and it was by no means certain that with a ministry so imperfectly educated the church could permanently maintain its position. We are therefore not surprised to learn from the correspondence of the times that, notwithstanding rapid increase in numbers, the most eminent men were oppressed with forebodings of approaching danger.

## CHAPTER XII.

### DIFFICULT PROBLEMS.

UNTIL the beginning of the present century the church had remained almost entirely German. Individual ministers had, indeed, conducted religious service in the English language, but the fact had not attracted general attention. Schlatter preached in English when he served as a chaplain in the British army; and Zubly, who had learned the language in early youth, employed it regularly in public worship at Savannah long before the Revolution.<sup>1</sup> Casper Wack preached in English in New Jersey as early as 1782, and a few years later Dr. F. L. Herman conducted an English service at Germantown on every alternate Sunday. Others, no doubt, there were who occasionally delivered discourses in what they fondly supposed to be English; but the fact was probably regarded by their brethren as a bit of pardonable eccentricity, like that of those of their number who occasionally allowed themselves to be persuaded to address a little company of Huguenots in doubtful French.<sup>2</sup>

It was not until the year 1804 that the Synod was

<sup>1</sup> In 1756 Dr. Zubly published "The Real Christian's Hope in Death," the earliest English publication by a German Reformed minister.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Zubly, as we have seen, preached regularly in French, and is said to have been a master of the language. Pastor C. L. Boehme, of Lancaster, preached at least one French sermon in Philadelphia in May, 1774; and in the same year the French Reformed church of New York extended a call to the Rev. Abraham Blumer, of Allentown, Pa. In his letter of declination, written in French, the latter confesses that, in consequence of lack of practice in conversation, he is no longer sufficiently fluent in that language to serve acceptably as pastor of a French congregation.



officially informed that the proposed use of the English language in public worship had led to a serious conflict in the church in Philadelphia. The Synod adopted a non-committal resolution, admonishing the contestants to keep the peace, and no doubt supposed that it had in this way disposed of a disagreeable question. Next year, however, the question came up again in a more threatening form, and it was resolved "that the English portion of the congregation be permitted to have *at times* services in the English language by a German minister of our Synod, or by an English one, upon the condition, however, that no minister not connected with a Presbyterian Synod be permitted to enter the pulpit, and not without the consent of the German minister." This decision proved unsatisfactory to both parties.

It has been said that the Germans have in this country been too slow in accommodating themselves to new conditions; and their ministers have been greatly blamed for not encouraging the use of the English language in the service of the church. The imputation may not be entirely undeserved, but possibly if we were familiar with all the circumstances our judgment might not be severe. The language of a people is not to be changed in a day, and there is a natural presumption in favor of the language of one's fathers. It is doubtful if English congregations would be more patient than the Germans were if there were present danger that the language which they have learned to love would be superseded by another with which they were but partially familiar. No doubt in the conflict of languages the Reformed Church has lost many thousands of members; but, while deprecating the existence of unwarranted prejudices, we may perhaps take it for granted that it was the stern logic of events alone that could render such a transition possible.

As the troubles in the church on Race Street, Philadelphia, were the earliest of their kind, and may be regarded as typical of those which at a later date occurred in many other congregations, it may perhaps be well to consider them with some degree of minuteness.

"The congregation," says Dr. Berg,<sup>1</sup> "had become overgrown." The founders of the church had passed away, and in business and social life their descendants had come to use the English language almost to the exclusion of German. The children, in many instances, failed to understand the worship which they were required to attend. Naturally enough this party was warmly attached to the church on historic grounds, supposing, perhaps, that because their fathers had built it it was peculiarly their own. If it had been possible they would have introduced the English language into the service of the church at a much earlier date than the one on which it was actually accomplished.

On the other hand, the strictly German party showed no signs of growing weaker, being constantly recruited by immigration from the fatherland. To them the fact that the church had always been German was a sufficient reason for the exclusion of English. That on both sides there were social prejudices and disagreements will be readily understood.

The Rev. Samuel Helffenstein<sup>2</sup> was pastor of the church from 1799 to 1831. He was by nature and training well suited to occupy a mediating position between the conflicting parties, and possibly for this very reason was in turn attacked from opposite directions. His personal in-

<sup>1</sup> "Christian Landmarks," p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Helffenstein, D.D., eldest son of J. C. Albertus Helffenstein, was born at Germantown, Pa., April 17, 1775, and died at North Wales, Pa., October 17, 1866. He was the author of "Didactic Theology" and of a volume of poems.

clinations were in favor of German, though he could preach acceptably in English. At first, therefore, he held to the Germans; and when, in 1805, there was a tie-vote in the Consistory on the question of introducing the English language into the services of the church, the pastor decided the matter by voting in the negative.<sup>1</sup> The strictly English party now withdrew and built a church on Crown Street, which was for six years supplied by a Presbyterian minister, but finally passed over to the Reformed Dutch Church.

The relief afforded by the withdrawal of the English party was only temporary. Another English party was gradually formed, and Dr. Helffenstein himself appears to have become convinced that its demands could no longer be resisted. In 1817 the conflict began anew, and the Germans, who had a majority in the Consistory, passed a resolution summarily dismissing Dr. Helffenstein from the pastorate. The matter was finally decided in favor of the pastor. Then the Germans withdrew and organized a church on St. John Street, under the pastorate of the Rev. F. W. van der Sloot. English was now introduced into the old Race Street Church, but German services were not entirely discontinued until after the resignation of Dr. Helffenstein. Since that time the question of language has ceased to occupy the attention of the Reformed churches of Philadelphia, and from each of the congregations here mentioned a series of English and German churches has been respectively derived.

In other parts of the church the conflict concerning language was perhaps less violent than in Philadelphia; but that it existed in many other places will not be denied. When Dr. Lewis Mayer preached the first English

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Van Horne's "History of the Reformed Church in Philadelphia," p. 65.



sermon, in 1818, in the Second Street Church, Baltimore, he was actually threatened with personal violence. In country congregations the transition was, of course, more gradual, and it was frequently accomplished without serious dissension. The Synod manifested considerable prudence by declining to legislate on the subject, but the prejudice of the older ministers was intense. The writer well remembers the time when many of them fully believed that English was a mere jargon, in which profound thought could not be adequately expressed. As late as 1826, at the Synod of Frederick, Md., when a young minister attempted to deliver an English address, the president promptly reproved him, at the same time expressing his horror that the abominable English language had found its way into that solemn place.

When it became evident that, in cities and towns at least, the onward sweep of the English language could no longer be successfully resisted, many prominent pastors became discouraged and began to advocate union with some stronger ecclesiastical body. With the German language, it was feared, German faith and customs would also disappear; and of what use was it, therefore, to attempt a separate organization? In consequence of the lack of English ministers some of the best churches had found it necessary to call pastors from other denominations; and these men, however worthy in other respects, could hardly be expected to be in sympathy with the profoundest religious aspirations of their people. To some of them, indeed, ancient customs appeared to be mere formalism, to be abrogated as soon as possible, as a necessary preliminary to the establishment of a living church. As these ministers had come from different denominations their methods differed widely, and the result was great confusion. The people, too, were made to feel



that they had been altogether in the wrong, and that they must immediately accommodate themselves to a new form of religious life. Under the circumstances it is hardly surprising that the minds of thoughtful men were directed to the question of church union. If ancient forms of church life must of necessity pass away it was surely better that the transition should be made in accordance with the established order of some other denomination, than that it should be left to the notions of irresponsible strangers.

The discussion of this question soon revealed divergent tendencies. At first it seemed as if the movement would lead to union with the Reformed Dutch Church, though there were some who might have preferred an alliance with the Presbyterians. In 1803 the Rev. Dr. J. H. Livingston addressed a letter to the German Synod suggesting a fraternal correspondence between the two churches, and the proposition was unanimously accepted. The correspondence thus inaugurated has, with several intermissions, been continued to the present day. It may appear remarkable that a closer union between these two branches of the Reformed Church was not effected, but it was soon found that there were serious difficulties in the way. Though both churches were equally attached to the Heidelberg Catechism, the German body did not deem it advisable to increase the number of its confessions by subscribing to the Belgic Confession and the Articles of the Synod of Dordrecht, which it regarded as the exclusive possession of the church of Holland. Then, too, the two churches occupied different territory, and there was little personal acquaintance between their members. It was therefore but natural that the German part of the church should be drawn toward the Lutherans, who were their neighbors and were socially closely allied.

In 1817 the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of Prussia were by law united. Naturally enough the American churches manifested a desire to follow this example, and in the same year the Lutheran Ministerium invited the Reformed Synod to unite in the annual celebration of the Festival of the Reformation. This led the way to correspondence involving propositions for organic union. In 1818 the Lutherans proposed a plan for a joint theological seminary in connection with Franklin College, which was approved by the Reformed Synod.<sup>1</sup> At the same meeting the Rev. Peter Labagh presented an overture from the Dutch Synod, proposing that the two Reformed churches should unite in supporting the theological seminary at New Brunswick; but the Synod replied that "in conjunction with other Germans" it already had a share in an institution at Lancaster which it desired to sustain. During the following years the committees appointed by the German Reformed and Lutherans to consider terms of union held several meetings, but failed to arrive at a satisfactory agreement. In one of the later reports the fear is expressed that not all the churches of either denomination would enter the proposed union, and that the result might be to introduce a new denomination without decreasing the number already in existence. After 1824 we hear no more about this particular union movement.

The Reformed Church was thus thrown upon its own resources, and these were felt to be entirely inadequate. The people were becoming more intelligent, and children frequently addressed questions to their pastors which caused them to feel keenly the defects of their early education. The earliest Sunday-school in the German Re-

<sup>1</sup> This subject is so well treated by Dr. Jacobs in his "History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church" (American Church History Series, vol. iv.) that the present writer deems it unnecessary to enter into details.

formed Church had been organized in Philadelphia in 1806; but before the end of the first quarter of the century similar schools existed in most of the larger towns and villages. In some localities they were, however, bitterly opposed, mainly on the ground that their introduction would prove fatal to the catechetical system which had for ages been established in the church.

About the year 1820 a wave of religious feeling swept over the American churches. Its effects were in the main beneficent, and there were everywhere signs of a new life. Among its results may be mentioned the establishment of societies for the promotion of missions and of other enterprises of Christian benevolence. The methods frequently employed to promote a general awakening of religious consciousness were popularly known as "new measures"; and it must be confessed that some pastors allowed their enthusiasm to carry them to a position which would now be regarded as extravagant. There was a natural reaction which ran into an opposite extreme. In some churches the prevailing enthusiasm was denounced as "wild-fire," and the people undertook to extinguish it in their own way. They grew suspicious of their pastors, and every exhortation to a higher Christian life was met by an indignant protest.

It was a time of imminent peril. There was now a call not only for more ministers, but for ministers who were more thoroughly educated. Strong men were needed who not only comprehended the faith of their church, but were able to defend it. Fortunately there was a little company of ministers and elders who believed that the Reformed Church had a mission in this country, and who, in the midst of discouragements, employed the only means by which that mission could be accomplished.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

AS early as 1817 an Appeal, written by Dr. Hendel, was published by the Synod, requesting the churches to regard with favor a proposed plan for the more thorough training of candidates for the gospel ministry. This plan, it appears, was not perfected until 1820, when the Synod, convened at Hagerstown, Md., resolved to establish a theological seminary. At this meeting the most progressive churches were well represented, and the resolution was greeted with the utmost enthusiasm. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say that some of its supporters seem to have imagined that the work could be accomplished by a simple resolution.

The Rev. Dr. Philip Milledoler, of New York, was present at the meeting as a delegate from the Reformed Dutch Church. He was equally esteemed in the German church, in which he had begun his ministry. As he was thoroughly familiar with both languages, was withal an eloquent preacher, and a man of great personal dignity, it was believed that he was especially well suited to conduct the proposed institution, and he was accordingly elected professor of theology, at a salary of two thousand dollars per annum. At the same time the following action was taken :

*“Resolved, That no minister shall hereafter have the privilege of receiving a young man in order to instruct him in theology, but may only direct him in his preliminary studies.”*



That this action was unwise can hardly be doubted. The seminary, it must be remembered, was not yet actually established, and the necessary effect was to exclude candidates from admission until that work was accomplished. In the German part of the church the resolution was supposed to be especially aimed at the Rev. Dr. F. L. Herman, who instructed many students and had been suggested as a suitable candidate for the position of professor of theology.

It seems to have been supposed that the financial support of the proposed institution would cause no trouble. In the fever of enthusiasm the most brilliant promises were freely made; and some of the ministers actually pledged themselves annually to pay several hundred dollars out of their meager salaries in support of the seminary. Unfortunately these subscriptions were conditioned on the acceptance of Dr. Milledoler, and afterward failed to be collected.

The action of the Synod was not everywhere favorably received. In eastern Pennsylvania a storm was brewing, and it soon broke forth with a degree of violence which could not possibly have been anticipated. Dr. Herman opposed the establishment of the seminary, basing his opposition principally on its proposed location at Frederick, Md., which he regarded as too far distant from the center of the church. This led to discussions which became acrimonious and involved considerable personal feeling. Next year the Synod suspended from the ministry Dr. Herman's gifted but wayward son Frederick. No one doubted the propriety of the action, but it is said to have been communicated to the afflicted father by one of the officers of Synod in terms which proved offensive. Dr. Herman and his friends then withdrew from Synod and returned home without permission, for which acts they were severely cen-

sured by resolution. On the 24th of April, 1822, Dr. Herman and his friends met in the Maxatawny church, in Berks County, and organized a new Synod. Its first title was the "Synod of the Free German Reformed Congregations of Pennsylvania"; but this was afterward changed to the "German Reformed Synod of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States." Next to Dr. Herman the most prominent man in this new organization was his son-in-law, the Rev. John C. Guldin, who was in later life an influential German minister in the city of New York.

The "Free Synod" increased rapidly, and during its brief history included fifty-seven ministers and more than a hundred congregations. Its members repudiated the imputation of being in favor of ecclesiastical independence, but there can be no doubt that at first the general tendencies of the organization were in the direction of Congregationalism. In 1837 the Free Synod returned in a body to the "Synod of the United States," and what at one time threatened to become a dangerous schism was in this way effectually healed. It may be remarked that some of the men who had at first opposed the establishment of the theological seminary became at a later date its most enthusiastic supporters.

The organized antagonism to the proposed institution, as represented by the Free Synod, was in fact but a small part of the opposition which it had to encounter. Demagogues saw their opportunity, and by their influence conventions were held to protest against this new piece of "priestcraft." Legends concerning the oppressive character of the state churches of Europe were sedulously revived, and uneducated communities were warned that the benevolent contributions which were now solicited would be succeeded by a demand for taxes in support of a legal establishment of religion. A German schoolmaster, Carl

Gock, successively wrote two books against the Synod, which were remarkable only for their misrepresentations. J. C. Gossler published a reply, but it was a weak performance. The strong men of the church for obvious reasons declined to enter the controversy. Gock ended his career in the Berks County almshouse. A short time before his death he was visited by Dr. Harbaugh, who in conversation referred to his publications against the Synod. The old man was delighted by the allusion, and expressed the conviction that his books had prevented the "priests" from enslaving the people.

In the midst of these difficulties the friends of the seminary stood firm. Prominent among these friends were William Hendel, James R. Reily, Lewis Mayer, and Jonathan Helffenstein. There was also a little company of earnest laymen, of whom one of the most energetic was Bernard C. Wolff, who subsequently entered the ministry and became an eminent man. No doubt they were at times discouraged by opposition, but greater anxiety was caused by the peculiar attitude of Dr. Milledoler with regard to his call to the professorship of theology. For nearly two years he held the call under advisement; twice he accepted it and as often withdrew his acceptance. No doubt the situation was sufficiently discouraging; but we feel assured that if Dr. Milledoler's courage had not failed he might have accomplished a great work for the church of his fathers. His final declination was succeeded by a period of profound discouragement.

The friends of the proposed institution were not, however, disposed to give up their plan, and at the Synod of Harrisburg (1822) it was again considered. It was now felt that the work must be done on a more modest scale, and that, for a time at least, whoever accepted the professorship must expect to suffer many privations. It was sug-



gested that the professor might also serve a congregation, and there seemed to be an opportunity just at hand for making such an arrangement. Harrisburg was believed to be sufficiently central to please all parties, and the Consistory of the congregation at that place appeared before the Synod with a somewhat remarkable proposition: they expressed their willingness to accept as their pastor any minister whom the Synod might elect to the office of professor, provided their present pastor, the Rev. John Winebrenner, made room for this arrangement by presenting his resignation. The fact is that the congregation was in a disturbed condition, and the Consistory was desirous of effecting a change of pastors. Their pastor was in many respects a brilliant man, and had shown unusual interest in the establishment of the seminary; but he had recently carried the revival system to an extent that was unusual in the Reformed churches, and was even then accused of preaching doctrines that were in opposition to its standards. It was presumed that he could be induced to resign; but he asked time for consideration, and at this meeting of Synod no further action was taken.

Next year (1823) the subject was taken up again, and the Synod proceeded to elect a professor. On the first ballot the votes were equally divided between three candidates: the Rev. Drs. Samuel Helffenstein, Jacob C. Becker, and Lewis Mayer. Then Dr. Mayer withdrew his name and Dr. Helffenstein was chosen.

The troubles in the Harrisburg church continued, and these were, no doubt, not without influence on the mind of Dr. Helffenstein, who finally declined the call. Mr. Winebrenner held his charge for several years longer, but finally found it desirable to withdraw. He became more and more alienated from the Synod, and in 1828 it was announced at the meeting in Mifflinburg that he had re-



fused to notice its citations, and was even then preaching against the doctrine of infant baptism. His name was then reluctantly erased from the list of members. In 1830 he organized his followers into a separate denomination, which is known as the "Church of God."

At the Synod of Bedford, in 1824, an invitation was received from the trustees of Dickinson College, at Carlisle, Pa., inviting the Synod to establish a theological seminary in connection with that institution. The college was at that time under the care of the Presbyterian Church, but was financially and otherwise in a depressed condition. It was believed that the institution might be strengthened by connection with a theological seminary, which would naturally attract students to the college. As an inducement to accept their invitation the trustees offered the Synod a dwelling for its professor and the use of rooms for recitations in the college building, on condition that the professor should instruct college students in the German language. The conditions seemed promising and the invitation was accepted. The Synod then renewed its call to Dr. Helffenstein, with the proviso that if he should decline it a similar call should immediately be extended to Dr. Lewis Mayer. As was perhaps anticipated, the call was declined by Dr. Helffenstein and accepted by Dr. Mayer. That the latter had not sought the call is certain; but from the beginning he had been profoundly interested in the educational movement, and now felt it his duty to make every sacrifice that might be needed for its advancement.

Lewis Mayer was born at Lancaster, Pa., March 26, 1783, and died in York, Pa., August 25, 1849. Though of a prominent family, his early educational opportunities were limited. He was, however, a man of remarkable talents and of unremitting industry, so that he became in

time an excellent scholar. Dr. Schaff calls him "a man of reverent and devout character, clear and temperate judgment, and profound learning."<sup>1</sup> The same writer, however, deems it necessary to add that Dr. Mayer seems to have derived from De Wette and other theologians certain views which were regarded as deviating from the strict orthodoxy of the times. In the main, however, Dr. Mayer's system was of the type which generally prevailed in the Reformed churches, and his peculiarities of doctrine did not affect the thinking of his students to any appreciable extent. That he was thoroughly devoted to the church could not be doubted, and for years almost the entire responsibility of its educational work rested upon him. At a time when few appreciated the value of such things he laboriously gathered historical documents and planned on a large scale a "History of the Reformed Church," of which, unfortunately, but a single volume has appeared. The church was certainly fortunate in securing for its first professor of theology a man of the ability and devotion of Dr. Mayer.

The Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church was opened at Carlisle, Pa., on the 11th of March, 1825, with a class of five students, which soon increased to seven. Only one of these had received a classical education. The others were very imperfectly prepared, and, in an extant letter, Dr. Mayer says that he was compelled to "teach them the rudiments of Greek and even the grammar of their mother tongue."<sup>2</sup>

Under these circumstances the position of professor of theology was by no means pleasant, but Dr. Mayer certainly accomplished as much as was possible. The young men whom he trained for the ministry were recognized as

<sup>1</sup> "Kirchenfreund," October, 1849.

<sup>2</sup> Appel's "Beginnings of the Theological Seminary," p. 52.

well prepared, and the seminary gradually gained the confidence of the church. The arrangement with Dickinson College did not prove satisfactory, as the financial difficulties of the institution increased, and it was found that an instructor in German was not really required. The seminary was therefore compelled to depend on its own resources, which were as slender as can well be imagined.

That the institution was successfully founded was due in great measure to the labors of a plain country pastor. James Ross Reily (1788-1844) was in many respects a remarkable man. Of Irish and German descent, he seems to have combined the best elements of both nationalities. Though his piety was decidedly of the German type, he manifested a certain quickness in action which was in those days unusual. On several occasions he had, almost on his own responsibility, undertaken extensive missionary journeys to the South and West, and had succeeded in saving many churches that were ready to die. He was an eloquent preacher in German and English, and as a debater on the floor of Synod was acknowledged to be without a peer. Unfortunately he was for many years an invalid, and it was only at intervals that he could actively engage in the service of the church. One day, while crossing the Potomac on the way from Hagerstown to Shepherdstown, it occurred to him that if some one should visit Germany, where a deep interest had always been taken in the immigrant population of this country, a sum of money and a library might be secured for the seminary.<sup>1</sup> Immediately on arriving at his destination he declared his intention to undertake the journey, and without delay secured the approval of the authorities to his undertaking. It was generally supposed to be a "wild-goose chase," but as Mr. Reily personally assumed the financial risk there could

<sup>1</sup> Appel, p. 57.



be no valid objection, and he was supplied with the necessary testimonials. He sailed from Philadelphia in May, 1825, and returned to America in October of the following year. By the voyage his health appears to have been temporarily improved, and in Europe his preaching proved very acceptable. All classes, with the possible exception of avowed rationalists, vied in efforts to promote his undertaking. In Holland he was informed that the fund which in the last century had been set apart for the German churches of Pennsylvania had been distributed among poor congregations; but the Synod convened at the Hague gave him a contribution of one thousand florins, besides pledges from individual members. The king of Prussia, after a pleasant interview, handed him two hundred *Reichsthaler*, and granted him the privilege of presenting his cause to the Prussian churches. He also gave him many books for the library of the seminary, and some of these, stamped with the arms of Hohenzollern, are still preserved. Professor De Wette, of Basel, wrote a brochure in behalf of the American seminary, which was extensively circulated. In Switzerland, especially, Mr. Reily's mission excited popular enthusiasm to such a degree that ladies contributed their jewelry, and one even gave her gold watch. Wherever the cause was presented the result was marvelous; but again and again Mr. Reily's health failed, and he was therefore unable to visit many important places. On his return to America he was, however, enabled to report that he had received for the seminary, in Holland, Germany, and Switzerland, the sum of \$6669, besides pledges which were no doubt subsequently redeemed. He also brought with him about five thousand books, which had been presented by friends in Europe to form the nucleus of a library. The mission had proved a success, and the friends of the seminary were greatly en-



couraged. The Rev. Jacob C. Beecher, of Shepherdstown, Va., collected ten thousand dollars, which may be regarded as the earliest important contribution from the church in this country. Of even greater importance was the fact that the reactionary German party were profoundly impressed by the liberality of their brethren in Europe, and gradually came to the conclusion that after all the seminary might be a good thing. Its troubles in Carlisle were, however, by no means ended. There were dissensions in the Board of Superintendents concerning the purchase of property, and in 1829 the Synod directed the removal of the institution to York, Pa. As the effects were not numerous their removal was easily accomplished. It was, however, afterward generally felt that this action was hastily taken, and that it might have been better if the seminary had remained at Carlisle.

At York the seminary was reorganized on the 11th of November, 1829, and was there successfully conducted until the autumn of 1837. Dr. Mayer was assisted for some time by the Rev. Daniel Young, who was chosen assistant professor of theology. Mr. Young was a brilliant man, a graduate of Union College, New York, and of the theological seminary at Princeton. His health failed, and in the hope of its restoration he made a journey to the South, but died at Augusta, Ga., March 6, 1831, at the age of thirty-six.

As most of the students lacked preparatory training it was found necessary, in 1831, to establish a classical department, which was known as the High School of the Reformed Church. In 1832 it was placed under the care of Dr. F. A. Rauch, and became so prosperous that there was a general desire that it should be raised to the rank of a college. It was determined that the institution should be located at the place from which the most advantageous

proposals were received; but at the meeting of the Synod held in Chambersburg in 1835 it was found that three towns only—Lancaster, Chambersburg, and Mercersburg—had undertaken to compete. The invitation from Lancaster was presented by the trustees of Franklin College, in which the Reformed Church still retained a one-third interest; but as the institution would at that place have been under the control of several denominations, and as the connection of a theological seminary with Franklin College was not desired, the offer was declined. The invitation from Chambersburg had been extended by a few individuals, and was not regarded as sufficiently definite. Mercersburg was, however, well represented by the Rev. Jacob Mayer, pastor of the Reformed Church of that place. Mr. Mayer clearly foresaw the advantage that must accrue to Mercersburg from the establishment of a literary institution, and had succeeded in bringing the whole community to his way of thinking. In the pursuit of his purpose he did not leave a stone unturned, and a series of propositions was presented which was certainly sufficiently fascinating. After long consideration the Synod accepted the proposals from Mercersburg, and the literary institution was as soon as possible removed to that place. The Theological Seminary remained at York two years longer, under the care of Dr. Mayer; but it was felt that this unnatural separation ought not to continue, and it was brought to an end by the removal of the seminary to Mercersburg. From this time for many years the history of the two institutions runs parallel and must be simultaneously considered.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### MERCERSBURG.

MERCERSBURG is a pleasant village among the mountains of Franklin County, Pa. It is surrounded by magnificent scenery, and at the time of which we speak was regarded as peculiarly well suited for literary retirement and study. It was at that time less isolated than it became when the building of railroads to the West had changed the routes of travel.

Marshall College was founded at Mercersburg in 1835. It was named in honor of Chief-Justice John Marshall, who was one of the foremost men of his generation. Dr. Rauch, who had accompanied the High School on its removal from York to Mercersburg, was elected president. In the organization of the institution, it is said, he was assisted by one professor only; but in the next year the faculty was enlarged. It is indeed a remarkable fact that the early professors were without exception men of decided ability. The college was as poor as can well be imagined, and the salaries meager and not regularly paid. It was a time of high thinking and poor living.

Frederick Augustus Rauch, the first president of Marshall College, was born on the 27th of July, 1806, at Kirchbracht, in Hesse-Darmstadt, where his father was pastor of a Reformed church. The son was thoroughly educated at Marburg, Giessen, and Heidelberg, and was at Heidelberg a favorite pupil of the distinguished phi-

osopher and theologian, Carl Daub, for whom he always retained the warmest affection. Daub could not be said to belong to any particular school in philosophy; but he had mastered all the schools, and is termed by Tholuck "a hierophant in the temple of knowledge." The same writer describes him as "bolder than Schleiermacher," but retaining in the midst of prevailing skepticism an earnest Christian faith. "He was," says Dr. Nevin, "a man who lived for the invisible and eternal, on whose soul the visions of the Almighty, in the person of Jesus Christ, had unfolded their glory."

It was the golden age of German philosophy. Kant and Fichte had but recently passed away, and Schelling, Hegel, and Schleiermacher were the most brilliant stars in the literary firmament. Hegel had become especially famous, and his philosophy was the leading topic of the day. Hegelianism, it is said, was debated not only in the universities, but in legislative halls and even in commercial circles. Parties were formed, and there were vehement discussions concerning the proper application of Hegel's doctrines to theology, law, and politics. It is only within the last few years that we have ceased to hear much concerning Old and Young Hegelians, and Hegelians of the Right, Center, and Left.

It was but natural that Dr. Rauch should be profoundly interested in the great philosophical movement. "In this view," says Dr. Nevin, "he placed a special value on the philosophy of Hegel—the culmination of the process—although he was very far from surrendering himself blindly to his authority." If Dr. Rauch is to be counted as an Hegelian it must be in a sense very different from the one in which the term is ordinarily employed. He was an earnest Christian, who recognized Hegel as a mighty thinker, believing that, notwithstanding the evil use which had been



made of his philosophy, its methods might become an important factor in the advancement of the truth.

When Dr. Rauch had finished his course at Heidelberg he served for one year as *professor extraordinarius* at Giessen, and had just received a call to an ordinary professorship at Heidelberg when an event occurred which put an end to his European career. On some public occasion he ventured to express himself too freely on the subject of civil government, and was compelled to seek safety in flight. Though the circumstances are not accurately remembered it is not difficult to understand them. Dr. Rauch was but one of hundreds who under similar conditions were compelled to leave their fatherland, for the government was stern, not to say merciless. It has, however, been remarked that he never attempted to pose as a suffering patriot, as he might easily have done in this country, but always freely acknowledged that he had been imprudent.

After his arrival in America Dr. Rauch remained for some time in Easton, Pa., where he supported himself by giving instruction in music and by teaching German in Lafayette College. At this place he made the acquaintance of the Rev. Thomas Pomp and other Reformed ministers, who induced him to take charge of the High School at York. Here he was licensed and ordained, and subsequently chosen second professor in the Theological Seminary. When he removed to Mercersburg he retained his theological professorship, though he was temporarily relieved of its duties. In 1837 the separation of the college and seminary was brought to a conclusion by the removal of the latter institution to Mercersburg. Dr. Mayer resigned and remained in York, but was a year later persuaded to resume his place in the seminary at Mercersburg. It is not too much to say that he soon discovered

that his days of usefulness were ended. The students had been trained in lines of thought with which he was not familiar, and it is only too evident that he was unable to gain the sympathy and support which were essential to success. His peculiar views concerning the nature of the Trinity, eschatology, and other points of doctrine were brought by the students to the attention of Synod, and an investigation was ordered. At the Synod held in Philadelphia in 1839 there was a sharp conflict between the professors, and Dr. Mayer tendered his resignation. It was accepted, and he was formally thanked for his long and faithful service. The investigation was not continued, and Dr. Mayer retained in retirement the respect and confidence of the church. That the last year of his service was clouded by these troubles is greatly to be regretted, but their cause may be readily understood. It was a time of transition, and Dr. Mayer represented the period which was passing away. He was learned and pious, but his system was in the main of the type which had been current in the American churches during the earlier years of the present century, and to the students who had just tasted of the fresh stream of German theology his teaching appeared formal and unimpressive. That his divergence from accepted standards was more apparent than real may perhaps be gathered from the fact that his students were never accused of heterodoxy.

Immediately after the acceptance of Dr. Mayer's resignation the Synod elected as his successor the Rev. Dr. J. C. Becker, a German pastor of learning and ability. Dr. Becker declined the call, and for some time the leading men of the church were unable to agree on a candidate for the position. They had, very properly, an exalted idea of the requirements of the office, and some of them were perhaps inclined to underrate their own ability. A special

meeting of the Synod was held at Chambersburg on the 29th and 30th of January, 1840, and on the second day of the session an election was held. Several names were presented and withdrawn, and then, as by a common inspiration, the Synod unanimously elected the Rev. Dr. John Williamson Nevin, at that time professor in the Western Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, at Alleghany, Pa.

The members of the Synod which called Dr. Nevin to the professorship at Mercersburg have now passed away; but the writer remembers having heard several of them, many years ago, expressing their wonder that under the circumstances this action was taken. Very few of the delegates knew Dr. Nevin even by name. The Rev. Samuel R. Fisher, then of Emmitsburg, Md., alone had heard him preach, and the Rev. Benjamin S. Schneck, editor of the "Weekly Messenger," had followed his public career with profound interest. It was known to these men that Dr. Nevin was studying German theology, and this fact, together with his reputation for earnest piety, led them to the conviction that he was a man suited to perform a great work in the German church. Having heard that he was about to resign his professorship at Alleghany, they had written to him on the subject, but he had declined to be a candidate. Nevertheless some of Dr. Nevin's friends had assured them that one of his marked characteristics was supreme devotion to duty, and that if he could be convinced that it was his duty to accept a call he would do it at any cost. They therefore determined, on their own responsibility, to present his name to the Synod. Their enthusiasm was no doubt impressive, but the calling of a professor from another denomination was a new departure, and must have appeared to some of the delegates an action of questionable propriety. The fact, how-



ever, remains that when Dr. Nevin was nominated the other candidates—John H. Smaltz and Albert Helffenstein, Jr.—withdrew their names and urged his election. After prayer by Dr. Schneck a ballot was taken and Dr. Nevin was unanimously chosen. Messrs. Schneck and Fisher were then directed to present the call and to urge its acceptance. As the newly elected professor subsequently came to occupy a position of extraordinary influence in the Reformed Church it may be well at this point to present a brief sketch of his earlier career.

John Williamson Nevin was born in Franklin County, Pa., February 20, 1803. He was of Scotch-Irish ancestry and belonged to a family of eminence and influence. His paternal grandmother was a sister of Hugh Williamson, LL.D., one of the framers of the Constitution of the United States. His father, though a farmer, was a graduate of Dickinson College, and placed the Latin grammar in the hands of his son almost as soon as he was able to read. Before he was fifteen years old he was matriculated as a student of Union College, New York, then under the presidency of Dr. Nott, and, although the youngest in his class, was graduated with honor in 1821. During his college course he came under the influence of Mr. Nettleton; and though he subsequently came to disagree with the methods of that eminent revivalist he never undervalued the change of heart and life which he then experienced.

In the fall of 1823 he entered the theological seminary at Princeton, and during his course devoted special attention to Hebrew and biblical literature. In 1826 he was invited to supply temporarily the chair of oriental and biblical literature in the absence of Dr. Hodge, who spent two years in Europe to regain his health. During this period Dr. Nevin wrote his "Biblical Antiquities," a handbook



which was extensively circulated and is still well known. In October, 1828, he was licensed to preach the gospel by the Presbytery of Carlisle, and about the same time was called to the chair of biblical literature in the new theological seminary established by the General Assembly at Alleghany, Pa. Here he labored until he received the call from Mercersburg.

In less than a week after Dr. Nevin's election the committee of the German Reformed Synod started on their journey. It was in the midst of winter, and they suffered greatly from the cold in crossing the mountains. Their visit was entirely unexpected, and presented a subject of the utmost importance. The question of acceptance could not, of course, be immediately decided, but the committee were encouraged by their reception, and departed in the hope that their mission had not been fruitless.

The call to Mercersburg was externally by no means fascinating. It involved separation from cherished associations and labor in an untried field. To a man as earnest as Dr. Nevin these considerations were, however, of little importance. There was a grand opportunity for extended usefulness, and with his profound sense of duty he could not neglect it. It was on this ground that his former theological instructor, Dr. Archibald Alexander, advised him to accept the call. "The change of position," as Dr. Nevin himself afterward expressed it, "was not regarded as in itself a change of denominational faith, but only as a transition from one section of the general Reformed confession to another."

In the course of his German studies he had felt strongly drawn toward the German church. He had read Neander, and his conception of history as a divine life had come to him with the power of a revelation. Speaking of this period he says, in his unfinished autobiography: "The

course in which my religious life and theology lay was of one order with that more decided Christological tendency which came to prevail more fully in later years, and to which more than to any other cause, I owe whatever of peculiarity may seem to have attached itself to my theological views. It is just here that the key to my whole religious history lies. All along it has been a movement in the same direction; a movement away from the simply subjective in religion toward the supernaturally objective; from the spiritually abstract, as I look at it, to the historically concrete; and from the Gnostically ideal to the Christologically real."

Before accepting the call to Mercersburg Dr. Nevin carefully studied the Heidelberg Catechism, and recognized it as what it really is, "the crown and glory of the whole Protestant Reformation." It appealed to him especially in its Christologic character, and to the end of his life he regarded it with a degree of admiration that bordered on enthusiasm.

When Dr. Nevin, with his family, arrived in Mercersburg, he informs us, he was troubled with sundry misgivings concerning the future. He had received incorrect impressions of the relations of Drs. Rauch and Mayer, and feared that he would not be able to accommodate himself to the peculiar life of the institution. A few days sufficed to remove these unfavorable anticipations. Dr. Rauch received him with all the geniality of his nature, and his anxiety was dissipated. From the beginning there was mutual confidence and respect. The free and generous nature of Dr. Rauch invited confidence; and though Dr. Nevin appeared more dignified and retiring, the professors soon became intimate friends.

Dr. Rauch was at that time engaged in passing through the press his book on "Psychology," by which, it is said,

he introduced that fascinating science to American students. The work was favorably received and was soon introduced as a text-book into the University of Vermont, Dartmouth College, and other institutions. To the mind of its author it was a mere introduction to a proposed series of books on moral philosophy, by which he hoped to bring the general results of German scholarship to the attention of American readers. This he believed to be his life-mission, and in seeking to accomplish it would take no rest, so that he may be said literally to have worked himself to death. Speaking of Dr. Rauch at this period Dr. Nevin said, many years afterward:<sup>1</sup> "I perceived very soon that his learning and intellectual power were of a higher order altogether than I had before felt authorized to expect; although it was not until the appearance of his 'Psychology' that I learned to place him sufficiently high in this respect. Here again it became clear to me that his proper worth had not been rightly understood; and I could not but look upon it as a strange and interesting fact that the infant college of the German Reformed Church should have had placed at its head, there in Mercersburg—without care or calculation or consciousness even on the part of its friends generally—one of the very first minds of Germany, which under other circumstances might well have been counted an ornament and honor to the oldest institution in the land."

That Dr. Rauch held Dr. Nevin in equal esteem is evident from the following letter, written by him two weeks before his death, to the late Dr. C. F. McCauley, subsequently for many years pastor of the Second Reformed Church of Reading, Pa., but at that time a student at Princeton:

<sup>1</sup> Eulogy delivered on the occasion of the reinterment of Dr. Rauch's remains at Lancaster, 1859.

“MERCERSBURG, PA., February 16, 1841.

“MY DEAR SIR: If I had written you as often as I had intended doing you would have received a pretty large mail. My health, as you may have heard, has been very poor, and my debility so great that I had to give up writing for a number of weeks, and when your favor arrived I was unable to do anything besides attending partially to my duties in the seminary and college. Even at present I shall have to confine myself to merely answering some of your inquiries.

“And in the first place, I cannot help expressing my joy and heartfelt delight to know that you have not forgotten our beloved Zion, but are willing and anxious to remain in it and devote your talents and attainments to its welfare. This your resolution, my dear sir, has much rejoiced me; not because I am much of a sectarian, but because I consider our church as standing in need of every one of her sons that promises well.

“In the second place, I would say that our seminary possesses a man in Professor Nevin whose talents and learning and scientific spirit are not equaled by *any one* in this country. I say this with deliberateness and coolness. He is an excellent teacher, constantly active, and much experienced in ecclesiastical affairs. You cannot go through a more thorough course in Princeton than you can here, and as regards ecclesiastical history you will certainly find a most unexpected difference between the *spirit* in which it is taught here and elsewhere. I would, therefore, most cordially invite you to come here and study with us. The tie of friendship shall then again unite us, and love to the Saviour and a common interest connect us daily more closely. I hope and wish very much that you would make up your mind to enter our



seminary next session. It is in a really excellent state at present and deserves your full confidence.

"From a catalogue which I received lately (from your kindness undoubtedly) I perceive that you are not well. I hope your illness is not of much consequence. Allow me, however, to advise you by all means to be cautious and not to study too much. My experience in that line is worth something. I have lost my health merely because I have not taken exercise enough. May the Lord bless you and soon restore you to full health, the greatest of earthly blessings. Any arrangement I can make for you or any duty I can render you will cheerfully be rendered with the greatest pleasure by

"Your friend,

"F. A. RAUCH.

"MR. CHARLES MCCAULEY."

The year 1841 was in many respects an important epoch in the history of the Reformed Church. The Synod had resolved to hold a centenary celebration in commemoration of the establishment of the Reformed Church in this country, though no particular event was designated as worthy to receive special honor. It was also resolved to make a thank-offering of one hundred thousand dollars to the cause of general benevolence, though it was very properly declared to be "the primary object of the celebration to awaken increased attention to vital godliness, and to raise a more elevated standard of Christian piety among us as a people." The celebration was evidently observed with considerable spirit. The Centenary Hymn was written by Mrs. Lydia Jane Peirson and set to music by Dr. Schneck. Though the financial results may not have been quite equal to the expectations of the Synod, they were at least sufficient to encourage the church.

It was at this season of rejoicing that the church was surprised and shocked to hear of the death of Dr. Rauch. He died at Mercersburg, March 2, 1841, in the thirty-fifth year of his age. Though his health had for some time been declining, his final illness was very brief. That his death was an immense loss to the institutions of the Reformed Church cannot be doubted. In the ten years which he had spent in America he had made himself familiar with the English language, so that he could use it with accuracy and elegance. This is evident from "The Inner Life," a selection of his sermons published in 1856 by one of his pupils, the Rev. Dr. E. V. Gerhart. His American career appeared to be just opening when he was called away; but though his work was brief its influence is perennial.

For three years after the death of Dr. Rauch Dr. Nevin had sole charge of the Theological Seminary, assisted only by a teacher of Hebrew. He also served, without salary, as president of Marshall College, which became a flourishing institution. His personal dignity, force of character, and earnest piety gave him a degree of influence which is rarely attained by any instructor, and it is hardly too much to say that in the institutions his word was law.

During this period Dr. Nevin earnestly continued his studies in German theology and philosophy. In those days such subjects were in America generally regarded with great suspicion on account of their supposed prevailing rationalism; but it was not by their rationalistic side that Dr. Nevin was attracted. He read and studied Schleiermacher, but insisted that his grand ideas could be "separated from the rationalism of the times in which they were uttered, and held much more satisfactorily in accordance with the doctrine of the Athanasian Creed."<sup>1</sup> "Schleiermacher," he adds, "left no school in the strict

<sup>1</sup> "Antichrist; or, The Spirit of Sect and Schism," p. 6.

sense of the word. But he left behind him a vast number of prolific ideas, which have taken root in other minds, and shot up in different creations, that own no common bond among themselves, and no fixed dependence whatever on his system as a whole. Such men as Neander, Nitzsch, Julius Müller, Dorner, Richard Rothe, Ullmann, Umbreit, etc., all feel and own his genial influence, though in very different ways; just as the influence of Coleridge is felt in England and this country by hundreds who have no other connection as members of a common school." In the book from which we have just quoted Dr. Nevin freely acknowledges that two ideas which run through his most important writings had been previously advanced by Schleiermacher. These ideas are, first, that the person of Christ is the ultimate fact of Christianity, rather than his doctrine, merely, or work; and, secondly, that the supernatural life which this included comes through him into organic union with the life of nature for the redemption of the world. "Can any one see," he adds, "how this should remain necessarily wedded to Schleiermacher's defective doctrine of the Trinity, and not acquire its highest force when associated with the highest faith of the church?"

Coleridge, we think, says somewhere, with reference to the significance of certain medieval controversies, that "every man is born either a nominalist or a realist." If this statement is more than a mere fancy we shall have to recognize Dr. Nevin as by nature a realist, in the best sense of the term. To his mind the generic possessed a reality to which the individual can never attain. The supernatural world is real; the natural is by its very constitution transitory and evanescent. The church is therefore, primarily considered, not a mere voluntary association, but a divine constitution and order, as intensely real

and concrete as anything which the eye can see or the hand can feel. Christianity involves a new creation in the old world of nature, and the church is the body of Christ, through which, as a medium, he reveals himself to the end of time. "Are we not, then, without escape, held to the conclusion that the organization, the offices, and the sacraments are in like manner the forms of the manifestation and communication of the vital contents of the church as the body of Christ?"<sup>1</sup>

All this, it may be said, belongs to a later period, when Dr. Nevin's views were more fully developed; but it is very certain that already at this time he held the substance of these doctrines. In order to comprehend the field of subsequent controversies it is, at any rate, important to indicate its outlines.

The earliest of Dr. Nevin's important controversies was directly concerned with the life of the church. Mercersburg had been visited by traveling evangelists, who had conducted revivals which were characterized by remarkable enthusiasm and fervor. The excitement became intense, and ran into what Dr. Nevin regarded as unwarrantable extremes. When the "anxious bench" was at last brought out in the Reformed Church he rose at the close of the services and offered his solemn protest against the adoption of these "new measures." In defense of his position he published, in the spring of 1843, a little book entitled "The Anxious Bench." It was not, as it has sometimes unjustly been represented, an attack on revivals of religion. On the contrary, the author is careful to discriminate between genuine and spurious revivals; but insists that a true revival must grow out of the life of the church, and must not be forced upon it mechanically from without. He urges the German churches especially

<sup>1</sup> Dr. S. N. Callender, "Ref. Quarterly Review," April, 1894.



to make due account of their catechetical system, and to remain faithful to their historic life.

"The Anxious Bench" naturally encountered intense opposition. No less than six replies were published; but the book made its way, and exerted a powerful influence, especially in the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. In the Reformed Church it was, with comparatively few exceptions, favorably received, and may be said to have put an end to a movement which was foreign to its life. Its influence on the Lutheran Church has been fully recognized and freely acknowledged.<sup>1</sup>

In January, 1843, a special meeting of the Synod was convened in Lebanon, Pa., for the purpose of electing a German professor as successor to Dr. Rauch. After serious consideration it was resolved to extend a call to Dr. Frederick William Krummacher, of Elberfeld, Prussia. As Dr. Krummacher was the most famous preacher in Germany it goes without saying that the Synod would not have ventured to extend the call without some previous intimation that it would be favorably considered. The Rev. Drs. Benjamin S. Schneck and Theodore L. Hoffeditz were appointed a committee "to convey the call to Dr. Krummacher, and by all suitable representations to urge its acceptance."

The visit of the committee to Germany, in the summer of 1843, naturally attracted much attention. The delegates were kindly received, and the affection of the church of the fatherland was once more drawn to its American daughter. It was, however, soon found that the proposed removal of Dr. Krummacher was very unfavorably regarded, and the king of Prussia exerted his personal influence to prevent it. After mature consideration Dr. Krum-

<sup>1</sup> Jacobs's "History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church," American Church History Series, vol. iv., p. 418.

macher declined the call, though he could say concerning it: "The longer I considered it the more did I feel its increasing attraction." In his letter of declination he said:

"I stand before you, my soul deeply moved, tendering you my hand with the double assurance that I lay down the honor conferred upon me by your call at the feet of Him to whom all honor is due, and that in future I shall feel myself to be one of your number; and that so long as I breathe I shall not cease to bear the interest of your beloved church with a praying heart before the throne of God."

The American commissioners naturally felt disappointed by the declination of Krummacher, and were unwilling to return home without in some way accomplishing their purpose. They accordingly appealed to the leaders of the church in Germany to recommend a suitable candidate for the American professorship. It was felt to be important that the person selected should be a man of high culture, who could represent German theology in its best aspects, and who was not too old to accommodate himself to new conditions and to acquire a foreign language. After frequent consultations the theologians—prominent among whom were Neander, Julius Müller, and Krummacher—agreed to recommend Dr. Philip Schaff, a *privat-docent* in the University of Berlin, who, apart from other qualifications, was "a republican Swiss" and might reasonably be expected to feel at home in a republican country. It was on the ground of this recommendation that the commissioners sought out Dr. Schaff in Berlin and made him acquainted with their wishes. He was at that time but twenty-four years old, and though his literary work had already attracted attention his public career had hardly begun. Recognizing the fact that America presented an opportunity for extended usefulness which is but rarely afforded by the fatherland, he encouraged the commis-

sioners, and they returned to America with the assurance that their mission to Europe had not proved a failure. In accordance with their recommendation Dr. Schaff was elected to the professorship of historical and exegetical theology in the theological seminary at Mercersburg, by the Synod convened at Winchester, Va., on the 12th of October, 1843.

The newly elected professor came to America in the following year. Before leaving Germany he had preached in Elberfeld a sermon in which he took occasion to speak at some length of the moral destitution of the field in which he was called to labor. With much freedom he described certain classes of emigrants who might be said to have left their country for their country's good, carrying with them to the New World dispositions unfriendly to all right order in the state and all true religion in the church.<sup>1</sup> The publication of this sermon in Krummacher's "*Palmbblätter*" was perhaps ill advised, as it was immediately conveyed to America, and garbled extracts were published in the German political papers. As a natural result many of the foreign Germans in this country were greatly excited, and in some places indignation meetings were held to protest against what was supposed to have been a misrepresentation of German life in America. The rationalists were especially outspoken in their denunciations, knowing that Dr. Schaff did not sympathize with them in their theological tendencies. For this reason, however, the Reformed Church was encouraged, feeling assured by this very opposition that it was not unwittingly introducing a rationalist.

In October, 1844, the Synod met in Allentown, Pa. At this meeting Dr. Schaff appeared, and according to ancient custom was examined with a view to his admission to membership. The following was the report of the committee, as adopted by Synod and included in the minutes:

<sup>1</sup> Nevins's Introduction to "*The Principle of Protestantism*," p. 8.



“The committee appointed to hold a *tentamen* with the Rev. Dr. Schaff report that they have had satisfactory evidence of his being in regular ecclesiastical connection as a minister with the Evangelical Church of Prussia, having been ordained in the Reformed church of Elberfeld last April. They have satisfied themselves, also, that he was born in the bosom of the Reformed Church, and continues to be true to its faith as exhibited in the Heidelberg Catechism; and that he is prepared, moreover, to conform to the constitution and order of the same church as established in this country. They recommend, therefore, that he be received as a member of this Synod.”

On the 25th of October—two days after the adjournment of Synod—Dr. Schaff was inaugurated in the First Reformed Church of Reading, Pa. The theme of his address was “The Principle of Protestantism.” The discourse was carefully prepared, and was, in fact, a full discussion of the doctrine which is known as historical development. In the consideration of this theme views were advanced which, however well known in Europe, were by many Americans regarded as new and revolutionary. The main question of the age was declared to concern the nature of the church in its relation to the world and individual Christians; and the divine life which flows through all her members was held to constitute her a divine organism which is a proper object of faith. “The Reformation is the greatest act of the Catholic Church itself, the full ripe fruit of all its better tendencies, particularly of the deep spiritual law conflicts of the Middle Period, which were as a schoolmaster toward the Protestant doctrine of justification.”<sup>1</sup>

These utterances appeared new and strange, and many shook their heads in doubt as to their meaning. Dr. Schaff

<sup>1</sup> “The Principle of Protestantism,” p. 181.



himself remarked, less than a year before his death: "I said exactly what I had been taught by my German professors, and was not aware that my audience was not prepared to receive it."

The inaugural address was enlarged by its author and published in German as a volume of nearly two hundred pages. Dr. Nevin translated and published it in English, with an Introduction which was if anything more bold and aggressive than the original. It was in its English form that it attracted general attention and became the occasion of a controversy which continued for years.

In those days the conflict between Protestants and Roman Catholics was intense, and there were many public discussions. In these discussions the Rev. Dr. Joseph F. Berg, pastor of the First Reformed Church of Philadelphia, had taken the part of a leader, and he was universally recognized as a powerful controversialist. "The Principle of Protestantism" contained statements which he regarded as contrary to Protestant doctrine, and it was mainly through his influence that the Classis of Philadelphia was induced to adopt a series of resolutions demanding an investigation by Synod. When the subject came before that body, at its meeting in York, Pa., in October, 1845, it was discussed for four days. Though not technically a trial, it practically amounted to the same thing, and it has been generally known as "Dr. Schaff's trial for heresy." The result was a triumphant vindication of the address on all the subjects to which the attention of the Synod had been directed. "If it had been otherwise," said Dr. Schaff, "I would have gone right back to Berlin."

Though the Synod had decided in favor of the professors, the "Mercersburg controversy" had hardly begun. The two professors, Drs. Nevin and Schaff, however, labored

in perfect harmony, and their united influence extended far beyond the limits of the Reformed Church.

In 1846 Dr. Nevin published "The Mystical Presence: A Vindication of the Reformed or Calvinistic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist"—a book which has been held to mark an epoch in the history of American theology. The writer held that the American church had, in large part at least, fallen away from the sacramental doctrine of the sixteenth century; and that to study Calvin's doctrine of the spiritual real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper was the best remedy against the rationalistic tendencies of the age. The learning and ability of the book were never doubted; but some of its historical positions were questioned by Dr. Charles Hodge, of Princeton, and this led to a controversy in which several other eminent divines participated. Though we have no room to follow the argument at length it may be said that, so far as the German Reformed Church was concerned, the purpose of the book was fully accomplished, and that the sacramental position of the church has ever since been decidedly Calvinistic.

In 1847 Dr. Nevin published "The History and Genius of the Heidelberg Catechism"—a book which, though long out of print, is still regarded as the best history of that symbol of faith. In the following year appeared a tract entitled "Antichrist; or, The Spirit of Sect and Schism"—a powerful protest against the tendency to disintegration, which is the most evident danger of Protestantism. In the same year (1848) Dr. Schaff began the publication of "Der Kirchenfreund," a monthly magazine devoted to the interests of the German churches of America. Among the contributors were some of the most eminent ministers of the Reformed, Lutheran, and Moravian Churches, and the publication was in its day the best exponent of German scholarship and religious life in this country.

In 1848 the alumni of Marshall College resolved to establish a quarterly review, in which elaborate articles could be preserved in a permanent form. This publication was entitled the "Mercersburg Review," and Dr. Nevin was until 1853 its editor and chief contributor. In this review appeared his most important articles, and it is in its successive volumes that his theological history must be studied. Here he appears as a great thinker and powerful controversialist who never allows personal considerations to interfere with what he believes to be the truth. He was accused of Romanizing tendencies; but though his mind was at one time greatly exercised by "the church question," it does not seem possible that his way of thinking could ever have led him to Rome. His firm faith in historical development stood in the way of such retrogression. In his controversy with Dr. Orestes A. Brownson (1850) he presented an argument against the exclusive claims of the Roman Catholic Church which his opponents freely recognized as unusually strong. It was for his articles on "Early Christianity" and "Cyprian" that he was especially charged with Romanizing tendencies; but his purpose in writing these articles has been strangely misconceived. It was his intention to show that the Oxford Tractarians, in endeavoring to repristinate the church of the fourth or fifth century, were taking one of the many roads that lead to Rome. In the elaboration of his theme he showed that there is no such chasm as has been imagined between the church of the fifth century and the succeeding middle age, and he was therefore supposed by many to be writing in defense of Rome. As for himself, he declared his adherence to the theory of historical development, "which assumes the possibility and necessity of a transition on the part of the church through various stages of form, as in all growth, for the very purpose of bring-



ing out more and more fully the true inward sense of this life, which has always been one and the same from the beginning."

During this period Dr. Schaff wrote his "History of the Apostolic Church," which appeared in German in 1851, and was subsequently translated, under the direction of the author, by the Rev. E. D. Yeomans. The same writer, during his connection with the seminary at Mercersburg, published a "German Hymn-Book" (1859); "America: Its Political and Religious Character" (1854); "Germany: Its Universities and Divines" (1857); "History of the Christian Church of the First Three Centuries" (1858); besides various minor tracts and essays.

The teachings of the professors at Mercersburg, and of their coadjutors, came to be known as "Mercersburg theology"—a term which was at first employed by its opponents, but was afterward tacitly accepted by its friends. The latter preferred that their theology should be called "Christological" or "Christocentric," because it in a special way presented the person of Christ as the center of the Christian faith. It was not an organized system, but rather a movement in the life of the church, and consequently left room for extreme utterances on the part of professed friends, which did more harm than the attacks of its most violent opponents. As is usual under such conditions, some of the disciples became more radical than their masters, and advanced theories which must now be characterized as extravagant.

That the Reformed Church suffered losses during the Mercersburg controversy is readily acknowledged. Two members of the Classis of Philadelphia, on the ostensible ground of the heresies of Mercersburg, connected themselves with other Protestant denominations, and one of the oldest congregations—the church at Germantown—



was alienated from the church. On the other hand, there were several ministers and laymen who became disturbed in mind by studying the church question, and finally found their way to the Church of Rome. As a whole, however, we do not doubt that the Mercersburg movement was a genuine advance in the life of the church. It must be remembered that there was never at any time the least inclination to change the ancient standards of faith. On the contrary, the Heidelberg Catechism was honored with a long series of literary tributes, beginning, perhaps, with Dr. Nevin's "History," and culminating, in 1863, in the publication of a splendid tercentenary edition in three languages. In this series an important place must be accorded to the large Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism, translated by the Rev. Dr. George W. Williard.

A marked characteristic of the Mercersburg period was fondness for historical research. This is not surprising when it is remembered that it was at this time that Dr. Schaff, in the fullness of youthful strength and enthusiasm, delivered the lectures which formed the groundwork of his "History of the Church"—a work which in the Congratulatory Address to its author by the University of Berlin, in 1893, is termed "the most notable monument of universal historical learning produced by the school of Neander." The narrower field of denominational history was, however, by no means neglected. About this time Dr. Henry Harbaugh undertook the task of continuing the minute researches of Dr. Mayer, and finally produced "The Lives of the Fathers of the Reformed Church"—a marvelous work when we consider the difficulties under which it was accomplished. All this was, however, but preliminary to the work of the pastors, who in numberless monographs related the history of their Classes and congregations.

We have no desire to extenuate the faults of the Mercersburg movement, nor to undervalue the losses which the church was made to suffer. It involved, no doubt, a great "shaking of dry bones," but that the general result was beneficial we do not doubt. We have not, indeed, as yet spoken of the liturgical movement, which may be said to represent Mercersburg theology in its practical application; but this subject can be more conveniently treated in a subsequent chapter.

In 1853 Marshall College was removed to Lancaster and consolidated with Franklin College, under the title of Franklin and Marshall College. The Lutheran interest in Franklin College had previously been purchased by the Reformed, at an exact valuation amounting to \$17,169.61; and the interest which was supposed to belong to "the outside community" was at the same time formally transferred to the Reformed Church. In this way the endowment of Franklin College remained intact, and with the contributions received from the churches it became possible to organize a literary institution of advanced grade.

Dr. Nevin resigned his professorship in 1851, but Dr. Schaff remained in Mercersburg until 1865. Bernard C. Wolff, D.D., held the chair of systematic theology from 1852 to 1864, and was succeeded by Henry Harbaugh, D.D., who occupied the position until his death, which occurred in 1867. Elnathan E. Higbee, D.D., was professor of church history and exegesis from 1865 to 1871. In 1868 Emanuel V. Gerhart, D.D., was chosen to fill the place vacated by the death of Dr. Harbaugh. In 1857 a theological tutorship was established, partly on the basis of a fund invested in Germany, the gift of Baron Von Bethmann-Hollweg, and partly endowed by gifts from individuals and Classes. This tutorship has since been raised to a full professorship.

After the removal of Marshall College, Mercersburg appeared more than ever isolated from the social life of the church. Its position near "the border," during the Civil War, rendered it especially unsuitable to be the location of a theological institution, and for some time the seminary building was actually occupied as a military hospital. It was felt, too, that the seminary and college ought not to be permanently separated; and the seminary was accordingly, in 1871, removed to Lancaster, Pa., where both institutions have since been successfully conducted.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CHURCH IN THE WEST.

THE pioneers in the ministry of the Reformed Church in the West are deserving of high honor. They were pious men who had heard the touching appeals of settlers on the frontier, and had started out of their own accord to bear them the comfort of the gospel. Jacob Christman, John Jacob la Rose, and Samuel Weyberg, who began their labors in the West in 1803 and 1804, had all been pastors in the State of North Carolina, and may be supposed to have been well experienced in missionary work. It was not until 1812 that Synod resolved that "certain ministers be sent into the Western country to visit the members of our church residing there; and that a collection be taken up in each congregation for their support." In accordance with this action the Rev. John William Dechant began his labors in the State of Ohio in 1816. Thomas Winters was ordained in 1819, and became an energetic laborer. It is said that at one time his pastoral field extended over seven counties. Other eminent pioneers were John P. Mahnenschmidt, George Weiss, and Benjamin Faust. In 1820 it was found possible to organize a Classis of Ohio, consisting of five ministers, fifty congregations, and about eighteen hundred communicants. Four years later this Classis, at its meeting at New Philadelphia, O., resolved itself into the "Evangelical Reformed Synod of Ohio." By this time the number of ministers had reached thirteen. Until the



founding of more recent Synods this body was popularly known as the Western Synod, for its limits soon extended beyond the State of Ohio. Similarly the "mother Synod" in the East remained for many years the "Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States," but everybody called it the Eastern Synod, as it is officially termed at present.

The occasion which induced the church in the West to separate from the parent Synod was almost identical with that which had led the latter, in 1793, to declare itself independent of the church of Holland. In both cases the superior authority regarded the ordination of ministers as its special prerogative. The Classis of Northampton, Pa., had in 1823 applied to Synod for permission to examine a candidate and, "if found qualified, to ordain him to the gospel ministry." The Synod, however, declined the request, and officially declared that "no candidate shall in future be examined and ordained except by Synod." To the Classis of Ohio this action was peculiarly objectionable. There were three bright young men—David Winters, Jacob Descombes, and John Pence—who had applied for admission to the ministry, but had at the same time insisted that they were too poor to bear the expense of a journey "across the mountains." What was to be done? The churches were all poor, and to raise the money for traveling-expenses was not to be thought of. At last the Classis cut the knot by declaring itself a Synod, and the young men were at once ordained. The new Synod at the same time somewhat complacently announced that "the business of the church can be as satisfactorily transacted in Ohio as in Pennsylvania." A few years later, when the Eastern Synod had granted to its Classes the privilege which it had previously withheld, the Synod of Ohio was several times invited to resume its former

position as a Classis; but it had in the meantime tasted the sweets of independent authority, and was unwilling to accept a subordinate position.

The Western Synod at once professed its unalterable attachment to the Holy Scriptures and the Heidelberg Catechism, and promised to observe all the ancient ordinances and usages of the church. There was, therefore, no doctrinal controversy between the Synods, and from the beginning ministers were dismissed from one body to the other without hesitation. In 1842 the two Synods agreed on a *modus vivendi*, and the Western adopted the constitution of the Eastern. A plan of correspondence by delegates was adopted, and the statistics of one Synod always appeared in the minutes of the other. This arrangement was continued until, by the organization of the present General Synod, it became unnecessary.

That this peaceful condition was fortunate, inasmuch as it rendered subsequent union possible, will not be denied; but it might certainly have been better if the East and West had been organically united. No doubt the separation interfered with the work of home missions, for there were many people in the East who feared that the two sections would finally be alienated. It is marvelous, under the circumstances, that they did not drift farther apart.

Though the irregular organization of the Synod of Ohio may have been to some extent justified by urgent necessity, it did not at first appear a promising undertaking. The members were pious men, mild in disposition, and not particularly well qualified to bring order out of the confusion which then prevailed. In several cities rationalists had become numerous, and some of these seem to have taken a mean pleasure in annoying these orthodox pastors. On several occasions they sent the Synod books full of disguised infidelity, accompanied by an apparently

respectful request for a judgment with regard to their contents. It does not appear that the Synod ever fell into the trap. On the other hand, the wildest forms of sectarianism were rampant, and it sometimes happened that pastors and people were swept away by prevailing excitement. On one occasion the Synod excluded three of its members on some such ground, though we do not know of what particular form of fanaticism they were guilty. In 1837 the Classis of West Pennsylvania, which had hitherto been connected with the Synod of the United States, transferred its membership to the Synod of Ohio, and the latter became a stronger and more efficient body. The most discouraging feature remained the fact that the charges were widely scattered, and that it was difficult to bring the members together at synodical meetings. In 1839 an attempt was made to remedy this evil by dividing the Synod into three distinct Synods which were to meet annually, a General Convention being held triennially. This arrangement did not prove satisfactory and was in three years abandoned.

In 1846 a number of German ministers organized a body which was termed the "German Independent Synod of Ohio"; but after six years of independent existence they returned to their former allegiance.

In 1838 an attempt was made to establish a theological seminary at Canton, O. The Rev. J. G. Buettner, Ph.D., a well-educated German, had become pastor of several congregations near that place, and it occurred to Synod to secure his services for the instruction of candidates for the ministry. He was accordingly elected professor of theology, the Synod increasing by a few hundred dollars his salary as pastor and providing a lecture-room. Though we know little about him, it is plain that he was a man of ability and earnestness. He published a little book on



the Reformation and was prominent in controversies with the rationalists. By his colleagues in the ministry he was regarded with extraordinary reverence, and the students whom he prepared were loud in his praises. He seems, however, to have been unable to adapt himself to American life, and in 1839 resigned his charge and returned to Germany. Subsequently he published a book on America.

Nine years later, in 1848, an attempt was made to establish a theological seminary at Columbus, O., and the Rev. A. P. Freeze was elected professor; but he soon resigned. At last, in 1850, the Synod founded a theological seminary and Heidelberg College, at Tiffin, and the Rev. E. V. Gerhart was chosen professor of theology.

In its earlier history the Western Synod had been mainly occupied with questions of practical church life. There had been intense controversies concerning "the evils of formalism and fanaticism."<sup>1</sup> In the course of time these conflicts moderated, and general church life began to appear. In 1842 there was general reconstruction; the Synod was divided into Classes, according to the Eastern fashion, and in the following year measures were inaugurated for a Triennial Convention between the Eastern and Western Synods.

About this time several of the early graduates of the institutions at Mercersburg began to labor in the Western field, and their influence was soon extensively felt. Not to consider questions of precedence, we may mention such men as E. V. Gerhart, Moses Kieffer, Jeremiah H. Good, Herman Rust, and George W. Williard, all of whom were at different times professors in the institutions at Tiffin. That they experienced great difficulty in building up these institutions is very evident. There were no large contributions to the endowment, and there were seasons of actual

<sup>1</sup> Dr. I. H. Reiter, "Reformed Quarterly Review," 1864, p. 164.



privation. The absolute necessity of the times was the education of young men for the ministry, and to this end the leaders of the church stretched every nerve. It was, in fact, the work of home missions which appealed most loudly for aid, and for its successful prosecution the great want was a well-educated and self-sacrificing ministry.

The large German immigration to the Western States demanded increasing attention. Hitherto most of the members of the church had been natives of the Eastern States, and the German churches had laid more stress on simplicity in preaching than on elegance of style or even on grammatical accuracy. A few pastors had, indeed, been born and educated in the fatherland, but in the course of years they had accommodated themselves to the prevailing sentiment, and some of them preached in English as well as German. The American pastors now bravely undertook the work of preaching to newly formed European settlements, and some of them were very successful; but it was soon found that a new kind of work was generally required. The Synod was anxious to meet this want, and in 1861 elected Dr. J. H. A. Ebrard, of Erlangen, Germany, to a professorship at Tiffin, believing him to be the man most capable of organizing its German work on thoroughly Reformed principles. Dr. Ebrard declined the call on the ground of impaired health and advancing years. Fortunately, however, there were already at work in this country several ministers of German birth and education, who took up the work at this point and carried it forward to its present important position.

The relations of the Eastern and Western Synods gradually became more intimate. In 1844 the Western Synod sent delegates to a Triennial Convention in which the Reformed Dutch Church and the two German Reformed Synods were represented.\* The convention was purely

advisory, but accomplished an important purpose in preparing the way for better things. Though the Reformed Dutch Church withdrew after the second meeting, the German Synods, having thus been brought into closer contact, were unwilling to separate, and the convention was continued in a modified form until it was superseded, in 1863, by the organization of a General Synod.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### CHURCH WORK.

DURING the period of the two Synods there was decided advancement in every department of Christian activity. At first, it is true, these departments were not completely organized; and it may be remarked as characteristic of the period that the earliest periodical publication, except the minutes of Synod, was edited by the professors of the Theological Seminary and published by the Board of Missions.

In 1828 Dr. Lewis Mayer began at Carlisle the publication of a monthly "Magazine of the German Reformed Church." Three years later this magazine was transferred to York, published semi-monthly, and named the "Messenger of the German Reformed Church." In 1835 it was removed to Chambersburg, where it continued to appear until its final removal to Philadelphia. As this paper was the chief organ of the church during the most interesting period of its history, it naturally receives more attention in this volume than can be given to more recent periodicals.

The earliest German church papers were the result of private enterprise. The "Evangelische Zeitung" was founded by Dr. Samuel Helffenstein in 1832; but it soon passed out of his hands, and in 1833 was formally disowned by Synod. In 1834 Dr. D. Zacharias began the publication of "Der Herold," but it was soon discontinued

for want of patronage. In the two following years German papers were successively founded by Drs. B. S. Schneck and J. C. Guldin. In 1837 these private publications were withdrawn and the "*Christliche Zeitschrift*" took their place. The title of this paper was subsequently changed to "*Die Reformirte Kirchenzeitung*"; and having been united with the "*Evangelist*" it is now published at Cleveland, O., and is the principal organ of the German church of the West.

In 1840 the Synod resolved to found a printing establishment at Chambersburg, Pa. In 1844 the Board of Publication was organized for the special purpose of taking charge of this interest. In consequence, it is believed, of the fact that it had no responsible head, the establishment soon became financially involved, and in 1848 the Synod resolved to discontinue the work. The debt was large, but the Synod pledged itself to pay the entire amount. This promise, however, could not pay the notes that were maturing in the banks, and the affairs of the establishment seemed utterly hopeless. At this time the Rev. Moses Kieffer, pastor of the church at Hagerstown, Md., proposed to Benjamin S. Schneck and Samuel R. Fisher—both of whom had been previously engaged in the literary work of the establishment—the formation of a company to carry on the publishing operations of the church. The three ministers thus associated were subsequently known as the firm of M. Kieffer & Co., but Dr. Fisher was the business head of the concern. The firm not only assumed the debts of the establishment, but obligated itself to pay an annual bonus for the privilege of conducting the publications of the church. That the Synod was delighted with these propositions need hardly be said; and for fifteen years its publication interests were successfully conducted by M. Kieffer & Co.



The debts were gradually reduced and the establishment became a valuable property. In 1854 the firm voluntarily transferred to the Synod one half of its property, and ten years later sold its entire interest in the concern to the same body at a price much below its actual value. The course of the firm of M. Kieffer & Co. was recognized as most liberal, and the Synod spontaneously added to the purchase-money the sum of one thousand dollars, as a testimonial of gratitude for many years of faithful service.

For more than a generation Dr. Fisher not only represented the Reformed Church in business, but was the leading authority in the interpretation of its constitution. As stated clerk of Synod he seemed ready to answer all questions, and whenever ministers desired advice they were sure to turn to him. When Dr. Nevin published his book on "The Anxious Bench" there was some doubt as to whether Dr. Fisher would sustain him; but after the "Messenger" had spoken there could be no further question on that subject. In consequence of his position in this and subsequent controversies a complaint was lodged against Dr. Fisher for "malfeasance in office"; but at the Synod held in Philadelphia in 1853 he was acquitted with but one dissenting vote.

During the latter years of this period several other church papers were established. The most prominent of these was the "Western Missionary," founded in 1848 by the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah H. Good, of Tiffin, O. It is now entitled the "Christian World," and is published by the Reformed Publishing Company of Dayton, O.

A few years later we trace the beginnings of the German Publishing House of Cleveland, O., which is probably at present the most extensive institution of its kind of the Reformed Church in the United States.

At the risk of anticipating events it seems desirable at

this point to continue the history of the establishment at Chambersburg. The town, it will be remembered, was near "the border," and during the Civil War it was exposed to frequent raids. No special danger was, however, anticipated, and when the Southern army, under General Lee, passed through the town, the event may have caused some excitement, but no fear. So great was the sense of security that the Publication Board continued to make improvements and actually laid extensive plans for the publication of denominational literature. Just as these arrangements were being completed, a portion of the Southern army, under the command of General McCausland, entered Chambersburg, and on the 30th of July, 1864, laid the greater part of the town in ashes. The publishing house was situated on the public square in the center of the town, and was, of course, utterly destroyed. Nothing was left but the stereotype plates and book-accounts, besides the ground on which the building had stood and a heap of ruins. At a moderate estimate made at the time the loss amounted to nearly \$43,000, and there were, of course, old debts, which now became a double burden. It was at this crisis that the peculiar abilities of Dr. Fisher became especially apparent. At the direction of the Board of Publication he immediately went to Philadelphia and made arrangements for the publication of the periodicals. The energy which he displayed was remarkable, and in four weeks the church papers were once more in the hands of their subscribers. Since that time the publications of the eastern Synods have appeared in Philadelphia.

The periodical publications of a church are an index of its religious life. It thus appears that the revival of ancient charities occupied the attention of the Reformed Church simultaneously with the establishment of its theological and literary institutions.

The oldest charitable organization in the Reformed Church in the United States is the Society for the Relief of Ministers and their Widows. This society was founded as early as 1755 by the Coetus of Pennsylvania, which had obtained permission to apply to this purpose certain unexpended remainders of the annual stipends. Gradually the fund increased, and in 1810 the society was incorporated by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. The charter, it seems, was cumbrous and defective, and annuities could be granted only to residents of the State of Pennsylvania. In 1832, when the Synod appointed Dr. B. C. Wolff and others a committee to inquire into the state of the fund, it was found that the society had but three surviving members and that but two widows were receiving annuities. The surviving members, the Rev. Casper Wack, W. Hendel, D.D., and Samuel Helffenstein, D.D., held a meeting at Falckner's Swamp, in 1833, and transferred to the Synod the funds under their control, under the sole condition that the widows who were receiving annuities should not be deprived of them. The Synod expressed a desire that the society should be perpetuated, and at its direction certain changes were made in the charter by which the benefits of the fund became applicable to destitute ministers and their widows throughout the church. Since that time the society has been prosperous. There are at present about forty annuitants, and though the annual stipend is necessarily small, it has in many instances prevented actual destitution.

It will be remembered that the earliest periodicals were issued in behalf of the cause of home missions. That the leading members of the church were at all times interested in missionary work there can be no doubt; but at first it was placed in the hands of a Committee on Missions, which was generally impecunious. On the 28th of September,



1826, a Board of Domestic Missions was organized at Frederick, Md.; but for some years its receipts were trifling. The church was slow in appreciating the necessity of organized work. Hitherto it had been usual, when a church was founded somewhere in the West, to send the pastor or some prominent member to his former home in the East to collect money for the new enterprise. In this way large sums were gathered which no one ever thought of reporting to the Board of Missions. Of course this state of affairs was favorable to imposture, and the "Herumläufer" of a former generation came to the front again. Gradually it dawned on the consciousness of the churches that it would be better to direct their contributions into a regular channel, and the receipts of the board were consequently increased. In some localities the work was now enthusiastically supported, and devout people actually submitted to personal privations in order to be able to present liberal contributions. The work was gradually organized in accordance with the methods which had been found useful by other denominations, and several eminent ministers consecrated their lives to missionary work. It was not, however, until after the establishment of the General Synod that the work of missions could be thoroughly organized.

The Board of Foreign Missions was organized in Lancaster, Pa., in 1838. For several years the contributions were sent to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for general use. In 1842 the Rev. Benjamin Schneider, a missionary of the board, located at Broosa, Asia Minor, connected himself with the German Reformed Church, of which he had been a member in his youth. This was done, with the approval of the American Board, for the purpose of promoting the cause of missions in the German churches. To this end a book by Mrs. Schnei-



der, entitled "Letters from Broosa," served an excellent purpose. In 1849 Dr. Schneider removed to Aintab, Syria, where his labors were greatly blessed. For many years he was mainly supported by the contributions of the Reformed Church, but the missions which he served remained under the care of the American Board. A little later many Reformed churches contributed to the support of the Rev. Oscar Lohr, a member of the Classis of New York, who was at that time a missionary of the German Evangelical Missionary Society at Bismampore, India. It was not, however, until after the establishment of the General Synod that the German Reformed Church could be said to be directly engaged in the work of foreign missions. A partial explanation of this fact may be found in the enormous extent of its home missionary field. The immigration to America was so great, and its spiritual necessities so constant and pressing, that the church was not so strongly drawn to labor among the heathen as it might have been under different domestic conditions.

In all departments of Christian activity there appeared, toward the end of this period, indications of renewed life. Beneficiary education received considerable attention, and many candidates for the ministry were thus aided in the prosecution of their studies. There was, in fact, a certain restless energy, which may not always have been properly directed, but gave promise of higher developments. In 1851 Catawba College was founded, at Newton, N. C. Having been deprived of most of its resources during the Civil War, this institution was for some time left in a crippled condition, but it is now prosperous. In 1853 an effort was made to separate the Classis of North Carolina from the German Reformed Church; but the attempt proved unsuccessful, and the Classis is now one of the most prosperous in the denomination.

In 1847 the Classis of East Pennsylvania requested the Synod to take immediate measures for the preparation of a new liturgy. This may be regarded as the beginning of the liturgical movement, which resulted in a revival of the Mercersburg controversies, and with brief intermissions occupied the attention of the church for more than thirty years. Its position in the development of the church is so important that we shall consider it at some length in a subsequent chapter.

In 1857 it was suggested that the Reformed Church should celebrate the three-hundredth anniversary of the formation and adoption of the Heidelberg Catechism. This suggestion was offered by the Rev. Samuel Miller in the "*Kirchenzeitung*," and by the Rev. Dr. Henry Harbaugh in the first volume of his "*Lives of the Fathers*." Two years later the suggestion was renewed by the Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff at a meeting of the Classis of Mercersburg, and being sent up to Synod in the form of a request was by that body referred to a committee, of which Dr. Harbaugh was chairman. The plan, as elaborated by this committee, was comprehensive beyond anything which the church had hitherto attempted. The celebration was to be, first of all, "a sublime festal service to God." It involved the holding of a convention on the 19th of January, 1863; the enrollment of all the members of the church; and the reception of memorial freewill offerings from those who desired to present them.

The proposed celebration was approved by the church with remarkable unanimity and enthusiasm. That it proved in every respect successful was due in great measure to the untiring labor of Dr. Harbaugh,<sup>1</sup> though he could have accomplished little without efficient coadjutors.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Harbaugh was born in Franklin County, Pa., October 28, 1817, and died at Mercersburg, December 28, 1867; pastor of several churches

About the same time it was proposed that instead of the Triennial Convention, from which the Reformed Dutch Church had withdrawn, the two German Reformed Synods should unite in the formation of a General Synod. When the subject was, in 1860, referred to the several Classes for approval or rejection there were few persons who felt sanguine of a favorable result. The two Synods, it was said, had drifted too far apart, and their views on important questions were believed to be hopelessly at variance. The Heidelberg Catechism was, however, equally revered by both Synods, and the awakening enthusiasm of the church carried the resolution for union by a large majority. The tercentenary celebration may therefore be regarded as the close of a formative period and as the beginning of an epoch of united endeavor.

and professor at Mercersburg; founder of the "*Guardian*" (1850), editor of the "*Mercersburg Review*" (1867), and author of many books. He composed several hymns, of which the best known is "Jesus, I live to thee."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE TERCENTENARY YEAR.

THE Tercentenary Convention met in Philadelphia on the 17th of January, 1863, in the church on Race Street, below Fourth, of which Dr. J. H. A. Bomberger was pastor. About five hundred delegates were in attendance. Dr. John W. Nevin was chosen president, and Dr. Samuel R. Fisher and Elder Lewis H. Steiner, M.D., served as secretaries. The most eminent members of the Reformed Church and many ministers of other denominations were present. To have been in such a company was an experience that is not easily forgotten.

The convention opened with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the sessions were continued for four days. Essays by eminent divines of Europe and America were read, and the history and doctrines of the church minutely examined. The European contributors were the Rev. Drs. C. H. Hundeshagen of Heidelberg; J. J. Herzog and J. H. A. Ebrard, both of Erlangen; C. Ullmann of Karlsruhe, and G. D. J. Schotel of Leyden. The essays written by these men had been translated and were read in English. Original contributions were also presented by the following American ministers: B. S. Schneck, T. C. Porter, H. Harbaugh, Theodore Appel, Thomas G. Apple, M. Kieffer, E. V. Gerhart, G. B. Russell, D. Gans, B. Bausman, J. H. A. Bomberger, B. C. Wolff, and Thomas de Witt. At an evening meeting Dr. Schaff gave the sub-



stance of a German essay which he had prepared for the occasion, but which, he said, was too long to be read before the convention. It was published in the German memorial volume. After this auspicious beginning the delegates went earnestly to work. There were, of course, sections of the church which could not be reached by the prevailing enthusiasm, but no event in the history of the denomination had ever exerted such an extensive influence. A committee of which Dr. E. V. Gerhart was chairman issued a memorial edition of the Heidelberg Catechism; and the "Tercentenary Monument," a large volume, was published in German and English. Many copies of the latter work were destroyed in the following year at the burning of Chambersburg, so that it has now become scarce. The enrollment of the members of the church was carried out according to the plan of the committee, and the amount of freewill offerings, as reported in the following year, amounted to \$108,125.98. This amount would have been regarded as respectable in any American denomination, and it need hardly be said that it gave a renewed impetus to every enterprise of Christian benevolence.

A remarkable feature of the tercentenary celebration was its broad and genial character. In the report adopted by the Eastern Synod, in October, 1863, we read: "The celebration has thus far been kept remarkably free from a sectarian character or bias, and our brethren of other denominations have witnessed this whole movement with interest and have bidden us God-speed; so that love for the church of Christ generally is, we hope, promoted rather than retarded by this revival of denominational love and attachment. The truth is, its direct tendency is toward a greater unity among the divided members of the Christian family, for which we should continually strive and pray."

One of the most important events of the tercentenary

year attracted at the time but little attention. The Rev. Emanuel Boehringer was pastor of a small mission-church at Bridesburg, Philadelphia. He was poor in this world's goods, but rich in charity. One day he found on the street several destitute orphans, and moved by Christian sympathy he took them home and admitted them to his family. It was a pure act of faith, but that faith never wavered. In a letter acknowledging a contribution from the Egypt Church, in Lehigh County, dated November 2, 1863, he says: "The number of orphans now in my charge has increased to twelve, of whom five are the children of soldiers. With the blessing of God the undertaking must succeed. Our Orphans' Home is still but a grain of mustard-seed, but we trust that the time will come when under its fostering care many poor orphans will enjoy the blessings of a Christian and churchly training. The necessity for the establishment of such institutions is pressing, especially when we take into consideration the great number of orphans whose fathers sacrificed their lives in battle for the fatherland."

The institution which was founded in this humble way was at first known as the "Shepherd of Lambs," but is now called "Bethany." The founder and his faithful wife entered into their heavenly rest in the following year, but the work which they began was not suffered to fail. As the location at Bridesburg was found unsuitable, the home was in 1867 removed to Womelsdorf, Berks County, Pa., where it has greatly prospered.

The cause of the orphans appealed so directly to the sympathies of Christian people that within a few years similar institutions were founded in other parts of the church. St. Paul's Orphans' Home at Butler, Pa., was founded in 1868, and is chiefly sustained by the Synods of Pittsburg and Ohio. The Reformed Church Orphans'

Home at Fort Wayne, Ind., is under the special patronage of the Central Synod and the Synod of the Northwest. "Zoar," at Detroit, Mich., is at present partly supported by an undenominational society. Besides caring for destitute orphans the last-mentioned institution provides a home for worthy Christian people of advanced age, among whom are ministers of several denominations. All these institutions have been liberally sustained, and it may be said that in their prosperity the church takes special interest. It is a remarkable fact that they may all be traced to a single act of faith exerted by an obscure minister during the tercentenary year.

The General Synod met for the first time at Pittsburg on the 18th of November, 1863. Dr. John W. Nevin was elected president. The attention of the Synod was mainly occupied by practical subjects, among which the organization of the body itself was not the least important. In effecting the union of ecclesiastical bodies there are always questions of detail which present unexpected difficulties; but in this instance these difficulties were happily surmounted, and the general results were encouraging.

The tercentenary festival was formally concluded by a convention held at Reading, Pa., from the 21st to the 25th of May, 1864. This body was mainly occupied with summing up the work of the previous year, but at the same time offered valuable suggestions for future growth and advancement. The results of the tercentenary celebration may even now be regarded with satisfaction; and it is a subject of gratitude that in the most inclement season of our national history the church put forth blossoms whose ripening fruit we are now beginning to enjoy.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### GROWTH AND ADVANCEMENT.

THE organization of the General Synod was followed by rapid extension in the work of home missions. Though a comparatively small part of this work was accomplished through the regular boards, the missionary character of the church became more apparent, and numerous and successful efforts were made for its advancement.

It was at this time that the German work in the West rapidly assumed unexpected proportions. For twenty years or more emigration from the fatherland had been rapidly increasing. Conditions in Germany had greatly changed since the previous century, and it need hardly be remarked that the second migration differed widely from the first. Ministers were needed who were familiar with recent theological changes in Europe, and who were especially well armed against the aggressions of rationalism. Superficial observers may have gained the impression that the immigration of the latter period was thoroughly unchurchly; but there were, in fact, great multitudes who held to their ancestral faith. In many instances the latter gathered in settlements and founded congregations, as the pioneers of the Eastern churches had done in the previous century.

We have already referred to the beginning of the work among the foreign Germans in the Synod of Ohio; and the early labors of such men as Dr. J. G. Zahner, Dr. J. H.



Klein, and others, should not be forgotten. It is, however, important to remember, as indicating the close connection existing between the East and the West, that many of the most eminent laborers in this particular field had received their training in Eastern institutions. The Rev. Dr. E. V. Gerhart, though born in this country and especially familiar with the English language, began his ministerial work among the Germans of Cincinnati as early as 1849, and was very successful in laying the foundations of the Reformed Church in that city. The three men who are generally regarded as having been most prominent in the organization of the German work were, indeed, natives of the fatherland, but had studied for the ministry in this country and were thoroughly acquainted with the necessities of the American church. Dr. Max Stern, who was regarded as the missionary *par excellence*, and Dr. H. A. Muehlmeier, the "father" of the church in Wisconsin, had both studied in Mercersburg; and Dr. H. J. Ruetenik, the founder of the German Publishing House at Cleveland, and of many other important interests, had entered the ministry as a member of the Classis of East Pennsylvania.

There is a pleasant tradition of a meeting of these three men at a convention of the Tiffin Classis, Ohio, in 1853, where plans were laid for the work, which in less than forty years resulted in the establishment of three German Synods with more than fifty thousand members. It may be of general interest to add a few words concerning the special labors of these eminent men.

Dr. Stern was a man of signal ability and force of character. He preached Christ with the earnestness that is born of personal experience, and, possessing extraordinary talents as a catechist, was unusually successful in preparing the young for active church-membership. The center of his work was Crawford County, O., where he estab-

lished four important pastoral charges; but he was constantly engaged in missionary labor throughout the West.

Dr. H. A. Muehlmeier went as a missionary to Sheboygan, Wis., where he established a substantial church. Then he accepted a call from a country congregation in the vicinity, which had previously been served by Dr. Jacob Bossard. The history of this congregation, as related by Dr. C. T. Martin in his "*Geschichte des Missionshauses*," is extremely interesting. It consisted almost without exception of natives of the German principality of Lippe. That province had been, since the days of the Reformation, earnestly attached to the Reformed faith; but in the earlier years of the present century there had come a period of coldness and depression. About fifty years ago there was a genuine revival of religion, conducted by devout ministers of the established church. This movement the government foolishly attempted to repress. Pastors were forbidden to attend "conventicles," and in some villages devout people were imprisoned for no greater crime than having been present at a prayer-meeting. The Heidelberg Catechism was supplanted by a weak, if not rationalistic, Method of Instruction; but in one church at least the pastor taught the ancient confession by reciting it from memory until the children knew it by heart. The refusal of parents to allow their children to be catechised in accordance with the plan of the government was punished by fine and imprisonment. At last several companies of the oppressed people determined to escape from their troubles by emigrating to America; and one of these, after innumerable trials, found its way to Wisconsin. Fourteen families remained together and became the nucleus of the church at Franklin. For some time they were not even aware of the existence of a Reformed Church in this country; but at a critical moment

they were visited by the Rev. A. Berky, a missionary of the Eastern Synod, and the people were glad to submit to the order of the Reformed Church in the United States. In 1854 the Classis of Sheboygan held its first meeting in this church. It consisted of four ministers—Dr. H. A. Muehlmeier, Dr. Jacob Bossard, Henry Winter, and J. T. Kluge—and several ruling elders. Now there are about fifty German Reformed ministers in Wisconsin, and Classes have been organized in adjacent States.

The German population was rapidly increasing, and it soon became evident that the church in the East was unable to supply ministers in sufficient numbers to attend to its spiritual necessities. The Classis of Sheboygan accordingly, in 1859, resolved to found a Mission House, whose chief purpose it was to be to prepare German ministers for service in the American churches. The institution was without means, but there were practically no expenses. The teachers, Drs. Muehlmeier and Bossard, served without salary, and for some time the members of the church at Franklin received the students into their own families and fed and clothed them at their own expense, aided in a few instances by small contributions from Christian friends. The moral discipline of the school was under the direction of the Consistory of the congregation, and the life of the whole community was cheerful, though devout. In 1875 Dr. H. W. Kurtz (1823–89), a distinguished scholar, became connected with the Mission House, which was in 1879 raised to the rank of a college. This institution has always been faithful to its original purpose, and hundreds of young men have been trained for the work of missions.

Dr. Herman J. Ruetenik labored for several years in Toledo, and was called to a professorship at Tiffin. About 1860 he removed to the city of Cleveland, where, under



many discouragements, he founded the first German Reformed congregation. Now the Reformed Church has eleven congregations in that city.

In the religious interest of the Germans of the West Dr. Ruetenik founded several periodicals, from which has grown the prosperous German Publishing House of Cleveland. He also founded Calvin College, an institution which, as nearly as possible in equal degree, trains its students in the German and English languages. It is often called the "German-English College." The importance of such an institution will readily be recognized.

Several German District Synods have been established by direction of the General Synod. In 1867 the German Synod of the Northwest was organized at Fort Wayne, Ind.; in 1875 the German Synod of the East held its first meeting in Philadelphia; and in 1881 the Central Synod, the third German District Synod, was organized at Galion, O. That these German Synods have manifested extraordinary energy will not be doubted. In their methods they differ considerably from those of the English churches, but their zeal and devotion are universally recognized.

The prevailingly English portion of the church also found it desirable at this time to organize additional District Synods. Pittsburg Synod was organized in 1870 out of four Classes which had previously constituted the "borderland" between the Eastern Synod and the Synod of Ohio. The Synod of the Potomac, consisting of two Classes in southern Pennsylvania, and of the Classes of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, held its first meeting in 1873. The Pittsburg and Potomac Synods, having been mainly formed of territory previously belonging to the Eastern Synod, have coöperated with that body in many enterprises of Christian benevolence. The Synod of the



Interior, the youngest of the Synods, was organized at Kansas City, Mo., in 1887. Like the other Western Synods, it was formed of Classes previously belonging to the Synod of Ohio. The General Synod now comprises eight District Synods, of which five are prevailingly English and three are German.

During the earlier years of the General Synod little was done in the cause of foreign missions. The small sums which were contributed to this work after the withdrawal of the Synod from the American Board, in 1865, were mainly given to the German Evangelical Missionary Society. The General Synod had indeed resolved to establish a foreign mission of its own, but for some years little was done. The Sheboygan Classis founded a mission among the Winnebago Indians of Wisconsin, which was aided by the Board of Foreign Missions. The New York Harbor Mission was begun in 1865. This mission is mainly designed to give counsel and aid to immigrants from foreign lands. To many of these people it is a real blessing to be welcomed on their arrival by a minister of their own faith, speaking words of encouragement in the language of the fatherland. It is the duty of the missionary to direct the strangers to places where they may be cared for by the church, and as much as possible to aid them in avoiding temptation and danger. Incidentally the missionary has relieved much genuine distress. That such a mission deserves support will be readily acknowledged.

The interest taken by the church in minor enterprises cannot serve as an excuse for neglecting the general cause of foreign missions. It may, indeed, be urged that the church had no missionaries in the foreign field and therefore lacked the personal interest which is of so much importance in such an undertaking; and it may also be claimed, with some appearance of right, that the work of

home missions had increased to such an extent as to tax to the utmost the energies of the church. A more serious obstacle was, however, the theological and liturgical controversy which, as we shall see, occupied the attention of the church for many years, and prevented united and harmonious action.

In 1873 the Reformed Church Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was reorganized, but it was not until 1879 that the first missionaries were sent to Japan. The location of the mission was determined after consultation with the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America, which had previously founded a mission in that country and regarded the field as promising. The result has fully met the expectations of the church. Eleven missionaries have at different times been sent to Japan, and they have been well sustained by the church at home. The earliest church was organized in 1884. Subsequently the mission was removed from Tokio to Sendai, in northern Japan, where it has greatly prospered. This success has been largely due to the zeal and talent of the Rev. M. Oshikawa, a native minister, who has visited America. Much of the work of the missionaries has been educational, and in Sendai two institutions of advanced grade—the Tohoku Gakuin and a Girls' School—have been established. Suitable buildings have been erected, and the institutions are well supplied with the appliances necessary for successful work. A large building—the John Ault Memorial Hall—was built at the private cost of one of the missionaries, the Rev. W. E. Hoy. The evangelistic work has been mainly in charge of the Rev. Dr. J. P. Moore, the oldest missionary now in the field. The mission is connected with the Union Church of Christ in Japan. According to the latest reports (1894) it numbers twelve organized churches, of which five are self-supporting; forty-one preaching-sta-

tions; and about two thousand members. It will be seen, therefore, that the most recent missionary work of the Reformed Church has been prosperous; and as the offerings of the people are rapidly increasing it is hoped that it will soon be greatly extended.

The earlier years of the period of the General Synod should be regarded as a time of sowing and planting. Many important interests derive their origin from that season, though they have but recently attained in some degree to the ideal of their founders. It must not be forgotten that the General Synod was made up of elements which had previously been independent, and that time was needed for their consolidation. Under the most favorable circumstances occasional misunderstandings could hardly have been avoided; but the church was confronted by peculiar difficulties, and these led to extended controversies and disagreements. At the time the effect of these conflicts was necessarily depressing, but it is a remarkable fact that in all these trying years the church was steadily increasing in membership and liberality. We are therefore justified in regarding it as a season of growth and advancement.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### CULTUS.

THOUGH the Reformed Church has always manifested a marked preference for simple forms of worship it should not be regarded as unliturgical. Though in its early history the church undoubtedly gave less concern to cultus and government than to purity of doctrine, its oldest liturgies date from the days of the Reformers; and though in various European countries its forms of worship have differed greatly, the desirability of having such offices for the guidance of the church was never seriously questioned. In the administration of the sacraments and other sacred rites it was deemed especially important that the form of worship should be settled by the church; and the fact was generally recognized that divine ordinances may easily, though perhaps unconsciously, be profaned when the manner of their administration is left to the individual tastes of the officiating minister.

In this country the worship of the German Reformed churches was at first conducted in general accordance with the Palatinate Liturgy. This liturgy, however, needed thorough revision to render it suitable for permanent use in this country, and this, unfortunately, it did not receive. It was not reprinted, and after a while became quite scarce. Then there came a time of great confusion in the ordering of public worship. To some extent, it is true, the ancient customs of the church continued to be observed.



Religious service followed the general order of the church year, and the great festivals, especially Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension day, and Pentecost, were regularly celebrated. The service preparatory to the Lord's Supper was never omitted, and on a day in autumn, designated by the Consistory, there was a Harvest Thanksgiving, in which the congregation took great interest. Beyond these general characteristics it must, however, be confessed that there was little unity in the service of the church. Some ministers, in the performance of official acts, employed rituals which they had brought from Europe, while others used manuscript collections of uncertain origin which had perhaps been given them by their preceptors at the beginning of their ministerial career. The practice of the church in different localities varied greatly even where the service was entirely "free," and there was a general looseness in everything concerning ceremonial observance that was universally deplored.

Congregational singing had in some parts of the church almost become a lost art. In many of the German churches of Pennsylvania few of the ancient chorals were remembered, and each line of the hymn was separately announced and sung. It often happened that the minister and organist were the only persons in the congregation who audibly joined in singing. In the English churches the state of affairs was possibly more encouraging; but different musical collections were used, and little attention was given to hymnology. In 1830 the Eastern Synod adopted "Psalms and Hymns," which had been prepared at its request by a committee of the Maryland Classis. It was subsequently enlarged, and was a very respectable collection.

In 1841 an earnest effort was made to reform the worship of the church. It had become evident that the old

German Hymn-book of 1797 was becoming antiquated, and that the "*Gemeinschaftliches Gesangbuch*," which had usurped its place, was a poor affair; and the Synod ordered the preparation of an improved edition of the German Hymn-book. Its committee, however, prepared an original collection, which was popularly known as the "*Chambersburg Hymn-book*." This book is said to have been "prepared in the printing-office," and was certainly inferior to the work which it was intended to supersede. The hymn-book which is at present generally used in the German churches was prepared in accordance with a resolution adopted in 1857 by the Eastern Synod. In consequence of certain difficulties concerning the place and terms of its publication the book was issued as a private enterprise by the chairman of the committee, the Rev. Dr. Schaff, who had made the collection. Two years later it was formally adopted by the two Synods of the Reformed Church. Since its earliest publication it has been enlarged, and is now accompanied by well-chosen music. It has wrought a great reform in the congregational singing of the German churches, and is generally recognized as a collection of the highest order.

A small collection of English hymns was published in 1857 by the Liturgical Committee. A few years later hymn-books were prepared and published by committees of the Eastern and Western Synods. They manifested different and perhaps divergent tendencies, but were the result of thorough hymnologic study. The "*Reformed Church Hymnal*," prepared by order of the General Synod, was adopted in 1890, and the "hymn-book question" may therefore be regarded as finally settled.

In 1841 the Eastern Synod published a liturgy which had been prepared by Dr. Lewis Mayer. This publication, which was generally known as the "*Mayer Liturgy*,"

consisted of a series of forms for the use of ministers on special occasions. Though adopted by the Synod it did not prove acceptable to the church. Possibly the forms were too long and didactic; but it should be remembered that it was composed at a time when little attention had been given to liturgic study.

The preparation of a new liturgy was now regarded as a necessity, and in 1847 it was brought to the attention of the Eastern Synod by means of an overture from the Classis of East Pennsylvania. The importance of the subject was fully appreciated, and in the following year the task was referred to a committee consisting of the following persons: Ministers, J. W. Nevin, Philip Schaff, Elias Heiner, B. C. Wolff, J. H. A. Bomberger, H. Harbaugh, J. F. Berg; Elders, William Heyser, J. C. Bucher, C. Schaeffer, and G. C. Welker. At a later date the names of Thomas C. Porter, Samuel R. Fisher, and E. V. Gerhart were added to the committee, and D. Zacharias was substituted for Joseph F. Berg, who had resigned.

The work advanced slowly, for difficulties presented themselves at every step of the way. The subject was found to be much more comprehensive than had been imagined, and it came to be felt by the majority of the committee that the times demanded forms of worship more fully liturgical than those with which the Reformed Church had hitherto been familiar. Though there were differences of opinion there was no positive disagreement, and in 1857 the committee, of which Dr. Schaff was then chairman, published the work which was subsequently known as the "Provisional Liturgy." According to its preface it carried with it no binding obligation, and was put forth for the purpose of satisfying what was "believed to be a growing want of the Reformed Church."

The "Provisional Liturgy" was, from a literary point of



view, a work of high excellence. It contained much valuable material, and in its day exerted an extensive educational influence. Unfortunately it lacked unity and "was not fitted for smooth and easy practice."<sup>1</sup>

As soon as it became evident that the "Provisional Liturgy" was not well suited for practical use there was a loud call for its revision. With regard to this matter there was apparently no difference of opinion; the only question was concerning the principles on which the work was to be accomplished. Some persons desired a revision by which the book might become better suited for practical use in public worship, while others insisted on closer adhesion to the pattern presented by the liturgies of the sixteenth century. At the Synod of Easton, in 1861, the "Provisional Liturgy" was placed in the hands of the original committee for revision "in a way that shall not be inconsistent either with established liturgical principles and usages or with the devotional or doctrinal genius of the German Reformed Church." Rev. Thomas G. Apple, D.D., and L. H. Steiner, M.D., were at this time added to the committee, to fill the places of Dr. Heiner and Elder Heyser, who were no longer living.

At the first meeting of the committee as reconstructed it was found that the instructions of Synod were variously interpreted, and Dr. Nevin was directed to prepare "a report to Synod, setting forth a clear, definite, and full idea of both schemes of worship advocated in committee, in order that Synod may understand the real question at issue, and state in explicit terms what it requires at our hands." The report thus called for was afterward published as "The Liturgical Question." The author took strong ground in favor of what he called "an altar liturgy," and elicited a reply from Dr. J. H. A. Bomberger, in a

<sup>1</sup> Nevin's "Vindication of the New Liturgy," p. 25.



pamphlet entitled, "The Revised Liturgy." These tracts may be regarded as the beginning of a long series of controversial books and pamphlets.

At the first meeting of the General Synod, in 1863, the Synod of Ohio received permission to prepare a liturgy, and the Eastern Synod was recommended to go forward with its revision. In accordance with this resolution the "Order of Worship" appeared in 1866 and the "Western Liturgy" in the following year. Though neither of these liturgies was formally adopted, the "Order of Worship" was in 1866 allowed by the General Synod as "proper to be used," and in 1869 similar recognition was extended to the "Western Liturgy." The controversy, however, increased in intensity, and at one time it seemed likely to result in schism. At last, in 1878, the General Synod committed all the questions which had been in controversy to a special commission, which has since been known as the "Peace Commission." This body, in 1881, presented a report covering the whole field of doctrine, cultus, and government, which was unanimously adopted. In accordance with the expressed hope of the commission it has proved "a basis for solid and enduring peace." As one of the results of its labors the commission prepared and published the "Directory of Worship," which was in 1887 adopted by the church. In consequence of this action controversy has ceased. The church, it may be added, practically occupies the position which it has held from the beginning. It desires to be recognized as a liturgical church, and its conceptions of the requirements of Christian worship have, during its discussions of the subject, been greatly enlarged; but there is no disposition to use a liturgy in an exclusive way, nor to abridge the liberty which is the privilege of pastors and people.

## CHAPTER XX.

### CONCLUSION.

WHEN the General Synod was founded, in 1863, there were grave fears that the organization would fail to be permanent. It was composed of elements which had hitherto been practically independent, and it was supposed that they could not be brought into harmonious union. At one time, it must be confessed, it seemed as if the most unfavorable anticipations must be realized; but we are now beginning to recognize the fact that the trials of earlier days were inseparable from the development of a higher life.

Since the unanimous adoption of the report of the Peace Commission, in 1881, the church has enjoyed remarkable prosperity. It has not been a season of controversy, but of quiet advancement. Differences of opinion exist, but it is believed that the church has reached a position in the apprehension of truth that has rendered the recurrence of conflicts like those of former days at least improbable. As firmly as ever the church adheres to its ancient confession, and in full accordance with its teachings Christ is recognized as the center and substance of the Christian faith. With this general recognition there has been less disposition to insist on absolute uniformity in minor matters; and with the development of a more catholic spirit there has been an inclination to welcome the good in all its forms. It is on this ground that our branch of the

Reformed Church has taken an advanced position in the cause of Christian union. At the successive meetings of the "Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System" the church has been well represented, and its delegates have welcomed every well-meant effort to bring the churches of this order into closer relations. With reference to the recent efforts to form a closer union with the Reformed Church in America it need only be said that though these movements did not originate in the German branch of the church it supported them with remarkable unanimity. In 1874 and 1888, when organic union was proposed, the difficulties were fully appreciated, but it was believed that by the exercise of the broadest charity minor differences might in time be made to disappear. In 1891, when a federal union of the two churches was proposed, the General Synod held a special meeting to receive the favorable report of its commissioners, and the union was subsequently approved by an almost unanimous vote of the Classes. It was generally believed, we venture to say, that in closer union the historic life of the Reformed Church would more fully reveal itself, and possibly in due time reach higher developments than have in this country been attained. The failure of this union movement has been greatly regretted. Both churches have dropped "the foreign patial adjective," and are ordinarily called by the same name. That one church is officially styled the "Reformed Church in the United States" and the other the "Reformed Church in America" is a distinction which we conceive to be purely accidental.

It will, of course, be understood that we have no room to enter into particulars with regard to the recent history of the Reformed Church in the United States. It may be said, in a general way, that the benevolent contributions of the people have increased, and that every worthy

cause has thus been favored to a degree which was previously unknown. This fact is especially evident in the growth and prosperity of theological and literary institutions, of which several have recently received considerable gifts or bequests. Eighteen schools of various grades enjoy the patronage of the church. Of these the following are best known:

*Eastern Theological Seminary*, removed from Mercersburg to Lancaster, Pa., in 1871, has recently erected a large and commodious building, which was dedicated May 10, 1894. The following is the faculty as at present constituted: Emanuel V. Gerhart, systematic theology; Thomas G. Apple, church history; Frederick A. Gast, Hebrew and Old Testament theology; John C. Bowman, New Testament exegesis; William Rupp, practical theology.

*Western Theological Seminary*, Tiffin, O. Faculty: David van Horne, systematic theology; Herman Rust, church history; Alvin S. Zerbe, Hebrew and Old Testament theology; John I. Swander, practical theology.

*Franklin and Marshall College*, founded in 1853 by the union of two older colleges. The successive presidents have been Emanuel V. Gerhart, John Williamson Nevin,<sup>1</sup> Thomas G. Apple, and John S. Stahr.

*Heidelberg University*, Tiffin, O., was founded in 1850. The presidents have successively been E. V. Gerhart, Moses Kieffer, G. W. Aughinbaugh, George W. Williard, and John A. Peters.

*Ursinus College*, Collegeville, Pa., was founded in 1869 under the presidency of Dr. J. H. A. Bomberger. Though under no formal synodical control, this institution recog-

<sup>1</sup> After his resignation of the presidency of Marshall College, Dr. Nevin lived in retirement for some years, and was then called to the presidency of Franklin and Marshall College. He held this office from 1866 to 1876. He died at Caernarvon Place, near Lancaster, Pa., June 6, 1886.



nizes its amenability to the jurisdiction of the Reformed Church. The present president is the Rev. H. T. Spangler. Connected with the college is a theological department, of which Dr. James I. Good is dean.

Other literary institutions of advanced grade are Catawba College, North Carolina, the College of the Mission House, Wisconsin, and Calvin College, Ohio, whose early history has been elsewhere related. Colleges for women have been founded at Allentown, Pa., and Frederick, Md.

Concerning the various departments of missionary activity we can only add that they have recently greatly increased in extent and comprehensiveness, though in their general character they probably do not differ greatly from similar enterprises in other Christian denominations. In the past few years evangelistic work among the Hungarian immigrants has proved successful. Three Hungarian pastors have been induced to come to this country, and one of these has organized seventeen congregations among his countrymen. Church extension has been greatly promoted by the establishment of Church Building Funds, from which feeble congregations may be temporarily aided in the erection of churches.

Orphan Homes continue prosperous and are well sustained by the church. The Bethesda Home for Deaconesses, at Cleveland, O., has but recently been founded, but promises to accomplish much good.

As in other denominations, there have been great changes in methods of church-work. *Women's Missionary Societies* have been organized throughout the church, and have been very successful in their chosen field. *Christian Endeavor Societies* are numerous, and the *Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip*, founded by the Rev. Rufus W. Miller, has extended beyond the denomination in which it was first established.

In all departments of Christian activity there has been a tendency in the direction of more complete organization. Sunday-schools have received much attention, and a general secretary has been appointed to direct this important interest.

For many years the church has been engaged in the revision of its constitution, and in 1893 the work on which so much labor had been expended was referred to the Classes for final action. It now appears that the constitution as revised has not received the approval of the requisite number of Classes, and for the moment it seems as if the labor of years had been vain. It is believed, however, that there is little or no objection to the general principles on which the work was effected, and that with comparatively slight changes it may be made acceptable to the church.

According to the "Almanac of the Reformed Church" for 1894 the Reformed Church in the United States sustains thirty periodical publications, of which twenty-four are English and six German. Many of these are conducted on individual responsibility, but all strive to promote the best interests of the church. The Reformed Publishing House in Philadelphia is now conducted by the Rev. C. G. Fisher, D.D., who, in accordance with an arrangement with the Eastern English Synods, publishes the "Messenger," "Reformed Quarterly Review," and certain other periodicals.

In 1893 the church celebrated the centennial anniversary of the organization of its earliest Synod. Conventions were held in various places, and interesting addresses were delivered. The general effect has been to awaken interest in history and to lead God's people to a fuller apprehension of the truth which it reveals.

In the successive periods which we have attempted to delineate there are some things which we regret, but there

are more which call for devout gratitude. It is not without pain that we recall "the lost churches"; that we remember how in great cities and extensive regions where the Reformed Church was once hopefully founded it is now almost unknown. When we contemplate the immense work which as a Christian denomination we are called to perform we think it might have been better if so many of our brethren had not left us in our days of trial. The larger denominations with which they generally became identified could have flourished without them, while in the church of their fathers they might have accomplished an important work. It is, however, pleasant to know that, in some instances at least, the fields which were once ours are well cultivated, though not by the descendants of those who reclaimed them from the wilderness.

We profoundly regret that in the German branch of the Reformed Church so many years elapsed before the importance of the work of missions was properly appreciated, and that even now we fall short of our duty in this respect. Hundreds of churches have been formed out of our material by other denominations; and this work is still going on, especially among recent immigrants from the fatherland. No one, however, can do this work as well as those who are allied to this people by the ties of kindred and a common faith.

The difficulties that encompassed the pioneers in the work of establishing the German Reformed Church in this country must have appeared almost insurmountable. The English churches had been founded in the preceding century; they had been trained to self-reliance and comparative liberality long before Boehm and Weiss began their humble labors among the scattered Palatines of Pennsylvania. The Germans were poor, and had brought with them from the fatherland local prejudices and various



shades of doctrine. That in all their trials they were sustained by a profound religious consciousness cannot be doubted; but they had lived under a state church and could hardly conceive the idea of ecclesiastical self-government. Unfamiliar with the language of this country, they were slow to adopt the practical methods of their neighbors; and that in later days a change of language was accompanied by conflicts is not surprising.

These difficulties, and many others, were successfully overcome. Strong men arose and rolled away the obstacles that lay in the path of progress. That these men were earnest students and profound thinkers will not be denied. At a time when the traditions of the church had grown faint they labored to revive them; and often through doubt and darkness they led their people onward to the contemplation of high ideals of faith and duty. In all their conflicts the earnestness of the leaders remained undoubted; and it is a wonderful fact that the church was lifted up to a higher plane of believing, thinking, and living.

That the Reformed Church in the United States has rapidly increased in membership and efficiency is evident from its most recent statistics. According to the reports of 1894 the General Synod now includes 8 District Synods, 55 Classes, 938 ministers, 1646 congregations, 221,473 communicant members, 123,333 unconfirmed members, and there are 291 students for the ministry. The amount of reported contributions for benevolent purposes for the current year is \$257,947.

The Reformed Church in the United States occupies the ground which it has held from the beginning. Building on the one sure foundation, the fathers erected the temple in which their children worship. We are glad that it is not built exactly in the fashion of the fatherland, just as we rejoice that our civil laws and government are not



exactly the same as those which prevail in Europe. Holding firmly to fundamental truth, the church is growing broad and liberal, fraternally welcoming to her communion all that love the Lord. Thankful for the blessings of the era that is ended, we gird up our loins to enter another century, trusting that the Lord will lead us to more glorious revelations of his love and mercy; for, in the words of the Heidelberg Catechism, "He is able to do it, being Almighty God; and willing also, being a faithful Father."



A HISTORY OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM,  
OR  
MORAVIAN CHURCH, IN THE UNITED STATES OF  
AMERICA.

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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FOR a brief characterization of the doctrinal standpoint, ritual, and polity of the Moravian Church the reader is referred to vol. i. of the present series, pp. 272-275. The summary there given must, however, be supplemented by the following statements: All obligatory use of the lot was abrogated by the General Synod of 1889. The grade of acolytes is obsolete in America. Save as a board of final appeal, and as charged with watching over the carrying out of the enactments of the General Synods, the Unity's Elders' Conference as a whole can scarcely be said to any longer exert a direct influence upon the affairs of the American Province. It is otherwise, however, with the Department of Missions, clothed with the conduct of the work of evangelization among the heathen and in Roman Catholic lands—as regards both men and means the joint undertaking of the Moravian Church throughout the world.

The scope of these missions at the present time may be briefly summed up as follows: Greenland, Labrador, Alaska, the Indians of North America, the West Indies, Demerara, the Mosquito Coast, Surinam, Cape Colony, Kaffraria, German East Africa, Victoria, Queensland, Cashmere and Little Tibet, the Leper Hospital at Jerusalem, and the work of evangelization in Bohemia and Moravia. Exclusive of

the last mentioned, the latest statistics report 122 stations and 26 out-stations, with 338 foreign agents and 59 native missionaries, having 93,246 converts in charge, the total cost being from \$275,000 to \$400,000 annually.

Of this extensive work the following pages can give no account, their purpose being confined to a narration of the establishment and progress of the Moravian Church within the United States of America.



# THE MORAVIANS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.<sup>1</sup>

LIKE most Protestant churches, the *Unitas Fratrum* had its origin in a revival of personal, experimental religion.

When the exhaustion of material resources and spiritual energies resulting from the Hussite wars made Bohemia ready to accept the Compactata of Basel, there were devout persons who found no satisfaction in the semi-Romish national church. Availing themselves of permission to retire to Lititz, an estate near the eastern frontier, under the lead of Gregory, the nephew of the Primate Rokycana, they formed in 1457 what was primarily meant to be a Christian association rather than a new sect. But circumstances, especially persecutions, soon compelled this *Unity of the Brethren* to completely separate from existing ecclesiastical bodies. In 1467, at a Synod held at Lhota, near Reichenau, three of their number were formally set apart and ordained by priests who had joined them previously. To secure a ministry whose validity even perse-

<sup>1</sup> For the history of the Moravian Church previous to 1722, see "The History of the *Unitas Fratrum*," by Bishop Edmund de Schweinitz, S.T.D., Bethlehem, Pa., 1885.

cutors must admit, episcopal consecration was requested and received from Bishop Stephen, of the Austrian Waldenses, to whom the episcopate had come from Roman Catholic bishops at the Council of Basel. Michael Bradaeus, the recipient of the episcopate from Bishop Stephen, then reordained the three who had previously received presbyterial ordination.

Gradually a well-ordered polity was established. When Luther appeared this evangelical church of Bohemia and Moravia embraced about four hundred parishes, with a membership of two hundred thousand; had its own confession of faith and catechism and hymn-book, and was disseminating evangelical literature from two printing-offices. The Brethren were in hearty sympathy with both the German and the Swiss Reformers. Their deputations were cordially received at Wittenberg, Geneva, and Strassburg.

In 1549 the persecutions of Ferdinand I. drove many of their number into exile, and this led to the establishment of the Unity in Poland and East Prussia.

But the counter-reformation, inaugurated by Frederick II. after his victory on the White Mountain in 1620, practically blotted out the church of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren from the home lands. Thousands lost their lives through cruel tortures; many more thousands were expatriated, and as exiles were merged into other Protestant churches. Bohemia's population shrank from three million to eight hundred thousand. A phoenix-like return of prosperity, with Lissa, in Poland, as the new center, rendered illustrious by the fame of its presiding bishop, Comenius, Froebel's anticipator, did not endure. During the war between Poland and Sweden, Lissa was given to the torch in 1656. In consequence the governing board of the church scattered, Comenius finding a refuge in Hol-

land. After his death, in 1670, though the episcopate was maintained, most of the parishes in Poland gradually coalesced with the Reformed, for whom an affinity had been manifested since the Consensus of Sendomir in 1570. In Hungary, and also in Prussia, a few parishes preserved their distinctive organization. In Moravia and Bohemia secret adherents continued to cherish the doctrines and usages of the Unity, though outwardly conforming to Rome—notably the Pechatschek and Schallmann families of Bohemia, and the Kutschera, Schneider, Kunz, Beier, Stach, Zeisberger, Tanneberger, Jäschke, Neisser, Grassmann, and Nitschmann families of Moravia.

God searched out two extremes of society for his agents in the resuscitation of this almost extinct evangelical church, a carpenter and a nobleman. It was the former,<sup>1</sup> Christian David, born at Senftleben, in Moravia, in 1690, who first came into touch with the "Hidden Seed." After passing through checkered "Wanderjahre" and wearing a uniform for Frederick William I. before Stralsund, and again plying chisel and plane in Silesia, in 1717 he consecrated himself to the work of an evangelist, and as such began to visit various localities in Moravia, among the rest Sehlen, where dwelt five brothers named Neisser, whose grandfather, George Jäschke, had been a patriarch among the "Hidden Seed" of the Unity. As a result these men began to contemplate emigration from priest-ridden Moravia; but it was not until 1722 that definite prospects crystallized desires into actions. A young Saxon nobleman, remembering the experiences of his own forefathers who had removed from Austria to Franconia for conscience' sake, then assured Christian David that these Moravians might find a temporary refuge on his estate.

<sup>1</sup> Cröger, "Geschichte der erneuerten Brüderkirche," pp. 12 *seq.*; "Gedenktage der erneuerten Brüderkirche," pp. 1 *seq.*

This was Nicholas Louis, Count Zinzendorf, the scion of an Austrian house dating back to the thirteenth century.<sup>1</sup> His father had been in the diplomatic service at Dresden, where he was born on May 28, 1700. His mother, Charlotta Justina von Gersdorf, was the daughter of the prefect of Upper Lusatia. Both parents were devout Christians and warm friends of Philip Jacob Spener, who became one of the sponsors of their son. The death of his father in July caused the return of his mother to the home of her family, the castle of Gross Hennersdorf. Here the young count spent his childhood under the tutelage of his grandmother, the widowed Countess Henrietta von Gersdorf; for his mother in 1704 married the Prussian Field-Marshal Von Nazmer. Pietistic influences surrounded him, and his ardent disposition responded in a precocious manifestation of spirituality.<sup>2</sup>

Sent to Francke's Pædagogium at Halle when only ten, at fifteen young Zinzendorf covenanted with some of his school-friends to confess Christ and seek the conversion of all sorts and conditions of men.<sup>3</sup> But his relatives destined him for the diplomatic service, and therefore in 1716 sent him to Wittenberg to study law. His free time he devoted to theology in preference.

In the autumn of 1721 he entered upon the duties of an aulic councilor and justiciary at Dresden. Outspokenly consistent in his service of Christ, his piety astonished the court of Augustus the Brave, and drew down ridicule. In April, 1722, he purchased from his grandmother the domain of Berthelsdorf,<sup>4</sup> in Upper Lusatia, meaning to settle down as a landed proprietor devoted to the material

<sup>1</sup> Plitt, "Geschichte der erneuerten Brüder-Unität," MS., § 118.

<sup>2</sup> Verbeek, "Leben Zinzendorf," pp. 16 *seq.*

<sup>3</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. ii., p. 677.

<sup>4</sup> Plitt, "Geschichte," etc., §§ 127, 128.



and religious prosperity of his people and to the furtherance of vital godliness throughout the land. The parish clergyman dying while the sale was being effected, to further these plans he bestowed the vacant living on John Andrew Rothe, an able and zealous candidate for orders. Rothe brought to his patron's attention Christian David and his compatriots, who were longing for liberty of conscience. The count granted them a conditional refuge, but did not himself remove to his new home till after the first Moravians had settled there. There was no intention on his part to espouse their cause.<sup>1</sup> Other matters of greater personal consequence were then in his mind; for on September 7th he was married at Ebersdorf, in Voigtland, to the Countess Erdmuth Dorothea Reuss, and the young couple did not proceed to their country-seat till the Christmas holidays.

On receiving the count's promise, Christian David set out once more for Moravia, and reached Sehlen on May 25, 1722. In response, Augustin and Jacob Neisser, with their families, ten souls in all, left Sehlen two nights afterward,<sup>2</sup> under cover of the darkness, absolutely forsaking everything—home, lands, lucrative trades, friends. The long journey on foot was very wearisome, for a girl of three years and twins of twelve weeks had to be carried; and their reception was chilling, since the Baroness Von Gersdorf did not approve of the quixotic charity that might result in complications respecting these aliens. Their refuge, moreover, was an unreclaimed wilderness. But encouraged by Heitz, Zinzendorf's manager, and Marche, tutor in the Gersdorf family, and by Christian David, they commenced to build near the highway from Löbau to Zittau, and a half-hour's walk from the village of Berthelsdorf. The count did not

<sup>1</sup> Plitt, "*Geschichte*," etc., § 133.

<sup>2</sup> "*Gedenktage der erneuerten Brüderkirche*," pp. 1-33.

come into contact with them in person till the end of the year.

In 1724 he and certain of his friends, in pursuance of his plan to do for Lusatia what Spener and Francke had done for Halle, commenced to erect at Herrnhut, as the new settlement was named, a college for young noblemen, to be conducted similarly to the Pædagogium at Halle.<sup>1</sup> By a remarkable coincidence, on the very day (May 12th) when its corner-stone was laid with impressive ceremonies there arrived five young Moravians, who intended merely to visit the Neissers and then proceed to Lissa, with the aim of resuscitating the *Unitas Fratrum*. To this they had been impelled by a powerful revival of religion in Kunwalde and Zauchtenthal,<sup>2</sup> their homes, promoted by Christian David's visits. But they were so deeply impressed by the transaction they now witnessed as to determine to cast in their lot with that of the refugees. Thus met together two streams of tendency which in commingling were destined to resuscitate the church of the Moravian Brethren. It was from these men that Zinzendorf first heard of the history, polity, and discipline of the *Unitas Fratrum*.

Month by month larger and smaller companies of exiles swelled the population of Herrnhut. The fervid preaching of Rothe at Berthelsdorf also began to attract awakened men and women from neighboring parishes and from distant parts of Germany.<sup>3</sup> Among the rest, in 1726 several families of Schwenkfelder were driven thither by persecution in their Silesian home, and received temporary shelter. Increase in population furthered material prosperity, but also produced a ferment of disagreements on doctrinal

<sup>1</sup> Plitt, "*Geschichte*," etc., § 135; "*Gedenktage*," pp. 54-71.

<sup>2</sup> Cröger, "*Geschichte der erneuerten Brüderkirche*," vol. i., pp. 35 *seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Schrautenbach, "*Zinzendorf*," p. 112; Plitt, "*Geschichte*," etc., § 139.

points.<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1727 Zinzendorf resigned his office in Dresden and devoted himself to the alleviation of this state of affairs. Certain statutes were formulated, based upon the constitution and discipline of the Brethren, as handed down by tradition in the families of the refugee Moravians;<sup>2</sup> and the desire for inner unity culminated in a powerful experience of the presence and baptism of the Holy Spirit in connection with a celebration of the Lord's Supper in the parish church at Berthelsdorf on the 13th of August.<sup>3</sup> Young and old alike felt the gracious influence of this day.

Minute regulations for the culture of the Christian life followed. Herrnhut gradually assumed a position distinct from the parish of Berthelsdorf. Zinzendorf's extensive correspondence with adherents of Pietism led to requests to be supplied with tutors, schoolmasters, and chaplains from Herrnhut; and soon there arose an extensive network of itineracy in various parts of the Continent,<sup>4</sup> which later received the name of the *Diaspora*, an organization for the promotion of experimental religion without an endeavor to detach members from either wing of the Protestant faith.<sup>5</sup> All this had attracted the attention of Daniel Ernst Jablonski, court preacher in Berlin, and one of the surviving bishops of the Unitas Fratrum. After he had convinced himself that the exiles at Herrnhut were the rightful representatives of this ancient evangelical church, of his own accord he urged the transfer of the episcopate to them. Accordingly, in 1735, with the consent of Sitkovius, the other surviving bishop, who was at the same time superintendent of the Reformed congregations in

<sup>1</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. i., p. 632.

<sup>2</sup> Cröger, vol. i., p. 92; "Gedenktage," pp. 88 *seq.*, 107 *seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Cröger, vol. i., pp. 108-110, 117-119; "Gedenktage," pp. 104-106.

<sup>4</sup> Kölbing, "Bischöfliche Ordination," p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. i., p. 3.



Poland, Jablonski consecrated David Nitschmann at Berlin.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, by the advice of Archbishop Potter, of Canterbury, and of Frederick William I. of Prussia, Zinzendorf himself received episcopal consecration<sup>2</sup> at the hands of Jablonski and Nitschmann, having previously been examined in theology by Lutheran divines commissioned for this purpose by the king, and having received a favorable testimonial from them, as he had also in previous years from examiners of the University of Greifswald and from the faculty of Tübingen.<sup>3</sup>

But previous to this transfer of the episcopate, and with it the formal recognition of the continuity of the *Unitas Fratrum* by those best in a position to judge, Herrnhut had become a center of foreign missions.<sup>4</sup> In 1732 the negroes of the West Indies had begun to receive the gospel from Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann, whose subsequent consecration was primarily intended to subserve the commissioning of missionaries duly authorized to administer the sacraments. In 1733 Christian David and the two cousins Stach had set out for Greenland.<sup>5</sup> In 1733 St. Croix was added to St. Thomas as a mission field.<sup>6</sup> In 1734 Lapland had been visited, and two contingents were dispatched to North and South America—to Georgia and to Surinam.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kölbing, "Bischöfliche Ordination," pp. 49 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Spangenberg, "Leben Zinzendorf," p. 1038; "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. i., p. 355; vol. ii., p. 449; vol. iii., p. 343.

<sup>3</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. i., p. 458; vol. iii., p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> "Gedenktage," p. 134; Holmes, "History of the Missions of the Brethren," p. 293; Thompson, "Moravian Missions," pp. 79 *seq.*

<sup>5</sup> Cranz, "History of Greenland and of the Missions," etc.

<sup>6</sup> Holmes, "Missions," p. 437.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.



## CHAPTER II.

### INITIATORY STAGES IN THE UNITED STATES.<sup>1</sup>

IT was not Zinzendorf's purpose to keep the Schwenkfelder on his estates, nor would the Saxon government allow it. Hence in 1733 he corresponded in their behalf with the trustees of the colony of Georgia through their agent, Herr Von Pfeil, ambassador of Würtemberg at Ratisbon. The response was the promise of land and of a free passage thither. Having left Berthelsdorf in May, 1734, under the lead of George Wiegner, the Schwenkfelder changed their plans and proceeded to Pennsylvania. With them was sent a Moravian, George Bönisch, as an itinerant evangelist among the German settlers.

Now it seemed wise to obtain for the Moravians the tract abandoned by the Schwenkfelder in Georgia. It would afford an excellent base of operations among the Cherokee and Creek Indians,<sup>2</sup> and might become a welcome refuge should the Saxon government accede to the wishes of the opponents of Herrnhut. Governor Oglethorpe's good-will served to secure five hundred acres for the church and fifty in addition for the negotiator on the part of the Brethren, Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg,<sup>3</sup> part of the site of the present city of Savannah. Here a company of nine—

<sup>1</sup> For the beginnings of the Moravian Church in America up to 1748, see, in general, Reichel, "The Early History of the Church of the United Brethren in North America."

<sup>2</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. i., p. 351.

<sup>3</sup> Risler, "Spangenberg," §§ 75-83; Plitt, § 163.

Anton Seiffert, John Töltschig, Gottfried Haberecht, Gott-hard Demuth, Peter Rose, Michael Haberland, George Haberland, Frederick Seidel, and George Waschke—arrived with Spangenberg on April 7, 1735.<sup>1</sup>

A certain amount of missionary work was accomplished. Most of the Indians who had any knowledge of English gave a grateful hearing to Spangenberg especially, and Chief Tomotschatchi became his friend. Twenty additional colonists arrived early the next year, these being the memorable fellow-voyagers of the Wesleys.<sup>2</sup> On the 28th of February Anton Seiffert was solemnly ordained as pastor of the colony by Bishop Nitschmann. John Wesley was present at their pressive though simple service, and in his "Journal" refers to his having been carried in thought back to the days of the primitive church. Two weeks later Spangenberg left for Pennsylvania, to take the place of Bönisch.

In 1738, with the approval of Archbishop Potter, of Canterbury, an attempt was made to evangelize negro slaves near Purysburg, S. C., by Peter Böhler, John Wesley's spiritual mentor,<sup>3</sup> with the aid of George Schulius and young David Zeisberger. Schulius succumbed to the climatic fever the next summer. When Böhler, who had also preached to the Swiss settlers, joined his brethren at Savannah, after having been himself at death's door, he found

<sup>1</sup> Risler, "Spangenberg," p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> From "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal from his Embarking for Georgia to his Return to London" (third edition, 1765, Bristol, William Pine), it is plain that it was the *Moravians* whose calmness in the storm on January 25th deeply impressed him. Though he refers to them only as "the Germans" (p. 7), on page 2 he refers to "David Nitschmann, the Bishop of the Germans." Moreover, landing in Georgia on February 6th, he next day debates with Spangenberg, "a pastor of the Germans," respecting possible assurance of salvation, a thing with regard to which he had not yet come into clearness.

<sup>3</sup> Lockhart's "Peter Böhler"; Wesley's "Diary," February and May, 1738.

that their numbers had sadly dwindled, owing to fevers and troubles arising from their refusal to bear arms in the war with Spain. Some had died, others returned to Europe, and others left for Germantown, in Pennsylvania. Hence when George Whitefield, on his second visit to Georgia, in 1740, offered the remnant of the colony a free passage to Philadelphia, they gratefully availed themselves of his kindness, hoping to find not only Spangenberg, but also Bishop Nitschmann, since a Synod held at Marienborn, near Frankfort-on-the-Main, the previous November, had commissioned him to lead a band of evangelists to Pennsylvania. But the former had already left, and the latter had not yet arrived. On May 5th Whitefield, who was about to buy from Mr. William Allen, of Philadelphia, five thousand acres in the "Forks of the Delaware," in order to found a school for negroes and a village for destitute Englishmen, came to Böhler with the proposal that the Moravians should undertake the woodwork and he himself superintend the entire erection of the school. After all preliminaries had been settled a company of eleven Moravians made their way to Nazareth, as the purchaser had named the tract, a wilderness tenanted by Indians. They arrived on May 30th. For a while the only drawbacks were the common experiences of pioneers; but differences with Böhler on doctrinal points, when discussions arose on his coming to report about the work, caused Whitefield to dismiss the Moravians from his employ, with a notice, severe as abrupt, to quit his land at once. Winter was at hand. Providentially Nitschmann's forerunner, Andrew Eschenbach, now arrived, and cheered them with the prospect of his speedy arrival. He did come, with others, in December, and was empowered to purchase land to begin a settlement.<sup>1</sup> The winter had to be spent at

<sup>1</sup> Plitt, "Geschichte," etc., § 198.

Nazareth; but even before the purchase of five hundred acres at the juncture of the Lehigh and the Monocacy, from William Allen, had been fully consummated the next April, the first log cabin had been put up in a clearing on the hillside above the winding Monocacy.<sup>1</sup> Böhler was recalled to Europe. Before long the agreeably surprising news came from London that the Nazareth tract would also become the property of the church, the death of Mr. Seward, who had loaned him the money, having found Whitefield unable to settle with the executors and glad to negotiate a sale with Spangenberg and Böhler.

Additional candidates for missionary service arrived in the fall, and just before the close of the year the town that was to be received a significant name. On the 2d of December Count Zinzendorf had arrived in New York, and, proceeding by way of Philadelphia, reached the Brethren on December 21st. On Christmas eve, in connection with a celebration of the nativity, he named the place Bethlehem, in token of his fervent desire and ardent hope that here the true bread of life might be broken for all who hungered.

<sup>1</sup> Reichel, "Memorials of the Moravian Church," p. 162.



## CHAPTER III.

### ZINZENDORF IN PENNSYLVANIA.<sup>1</sup>

BANISHED from Saxony in 1736 without notification of charges or process of trial, "because he wished to live piously though a count," as Frederick William I. of Prussia aptly put it, Count Zinzendorf had since then been devoting himself wholly to the spread of the gospel. Frankfurt-on-the-Main and its vicinity, Berlin, Livonia, Holland, Switzerland, the Danish West Indies, and London had been scenes of his activity; and now circumstances seemed to favor his most chivalrous desires to be of use in a case of utmost need.

Although occupied by the whites only to the Susquehanna and the Blue Mountains, in the second quarter of the eighteenth century Pennsylvania contained a mixture of peoples, among whom the reaction from the oppression and the formalism of state churches had produced something like religious anarchy. Adherents could be won for all shades of tenets, ranging from utter religious indifference to fanatical separatism. The majority of the Germans, roughly estimated at about one hundred thousand, who

<sup>1</sup> Chief sources for this chapter are: (1) "Büdingische Sammlung," vols. ii. and iii.; (2) Zinzendorf, "Pennsylvanische Nachrichten vom Reiche Gottes, 1742"; (3) Schrautenbach, "Zinzendorf," chaps. xv. and xvi.; (4) "Minutes of the Pennsylvania Synods," MS., Bethlehem Archives; (5) "The Church Book of Tulpehocken," MS., Bethlehem Archives; (6) Plitt, § 211, based on Zinzendorf's letters written from Pennsylvania, and the "Jüngerhaus Diarium"; (7) sundry MSS. in the Bethlehem Archives.

had pressed in since the arrival of Pastorius in 1685, had formerly been at least nominal church-members. Though some had originally sought the Western world for conscience' sake, few preachers or schoolmasters were to be found by whose labors they might profit; and for the English they had a strong antipathy. Thousands lived without worship of any kind. There were heads of families who had never been baptized, and who brought up their children with no regard for the Christian faith. It had become a byword that a man who was utterly indifferent about his spiritual life belonged to "the Pennsylvania Church."<sup>1</sup> Neither the Lutherans nor the Reformed in the few parishes which were organized maintained a steady supply of pastors; and even had there been no vacancies the number would have been wholly inadequate to the needs of the German population. Moreover all sorts of religious excrescences flourished—witness the Protestant monks and nuns of Ephrata. It was some knowledge of this state of things that had led to the sending of George Bönisch in 1734, and of Spangenberg in 1736. The latter, while living with the Schwenkfelder, had been deeply pained at what he observed. One outcome of the Sunday services which he regularly held at the house of Christopher Wiegner was the formation of an association to amend the deplorable religious destitution of the Germans, known as "The Associated Brethren of Skippack,"<sup>2</sup> to which men of various communions belonged—earnest spirits like Henry Frey, Christian Weber, Jost Schmidt, Henry Antes, William Frey, George Stiefel, Andrew Frey, Abraham Wagner, John Bertolet, Francis Ritter, William Pott, John Bechtel, John A. Gruber, and George Bensel. Their monthly conferences for this purpose were maintained until 1740. In

<sup>1</sup> Spangenberg, "Zinzendorf," p. 1230.

<sup>2</sup> McMinn, "Antes," p. 111.

fact, Spangenberg's report to the authorities in Europe contains sentences which furnish the key to the early activity of the Moravian Church in Pennsylvania. After a detailed description of the religious condition of the nominal adherents of the two chief confessions and of the separatists, he closes: "Thus there is now a twofold work for the Brethren who shall go thither in pursuance of the Lord's will: the gospel must be preached to many thousands who know nothing of it, or who have an indescribable hunger for it; and the awakened who are desirous for fellowship must be gathered into congregations. And this is not the work for one man, but for many. Moreover there are the Indians, who do not willingly dwell near the Europeans: for them it may be that the hour of grace has sounded. And in the whole country there are few schools, and there is almost no one who makes the youth his concern. One may indeed see signs of a waking up here and there in the land; and it is often not otherwise than if a wind from the Lord was passing through the entire land and bringing all into movement and the spirit of inquiry. But since the affair is so extensive every one considers himself lacking in ability to take it in hand. Perhaps the hand of the Lord is in this."<sup>1</sup> This report it was that led to the sending of Bishop Nitschmann's colony of itinerants, and to the dispatching of Christian Henry Rauch at once to begin a mission among the Indians, and to the founding of schools very soon after the coming of the Brethren to Pennsylvania.

Zinzendorf himself entertained a larger ambition, and one worthy of him. Endowed with gifts adapted to the accomplishment of a project which the situation of his countrymen in Pennsylvania seemed to demand, he believed he might be able to effect an evangelical alliance of German Protestants in Pennsylvania, if he undertook the task not

<sup>1</sup> "Diary" of Marienborn, December 31, 1739, quoted by Plitt, § 205.



as a Moravian bishop, but as a free servant of Christ. He felt the more entitled to minister thus in virtue of the formal authorization received from the University of Tübingen on December 19, 1734; and there is no question that this faculty was as fully qualified to confer upon him Lutheran orders as any other ecclesiastical body in Germany. The king of Denmark had understood this when he took cognizance of his entrance into the ministry by a marked withdrawal of his friendship. Nor was any organic religious jurisdiction in existence among the Lutherans of Pennsylvania. In the colony there was as little a trace of a consistory to sanction or veto his step as there was a central authority in Germany which could claim a right to be consulted or to interpose. With a view to this larger activity, Zinzendorf accordingly resigned his Moravian episcopate temporarily at a Synod at Marienborn in July, 1741; and in pursuance of a similar desire that his rank might not obtrude itself, from the very beginning of his stay in Pennsylvania he wished to be known as Louis Türnstein, a secondary family name which he had already borne in Europe when traveling incognito.<sup>1</sup> It was far removed from his plans to advance the interests of the *Unitas Fratrum* as such. In fact, students of the inner history of that church are well aware that during the fifth decade of the last century, in spite of the count's lavish outlay and never-to-be-forgotten sacrifice of talents and time, it was his longing to break down the walls of denominationalism, which proved a peculiar hindrance to the natural and free growth of the Moravian Church in both Europe and America.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> When traveling from Reval to Riga, in 1736, his passport had been made out in this title.

<sup>2</sup> Plitt, §§ 225, 229.



He arrived at Philadelphia on December 10, 1741, where his person and his purposes excited general interest. Governor Thomas in a few days sent him a letter of welcome, and expressed his own satisfaction at his design to supply the Germans with preaching.<sup>1</sup> After a brief visit to Bethlehem at Christmas, he returned to Germantown, where he preached in the Reformed church on the last day of the year, having previously formed the acquaintance of a number of the quondam "Associated Brethren of Skippack," one of whom, Henry Antes, then a member of the Reformed Church, from his home in Frederick township, had issued a circular on December 15th, calling a general conference in Germantown, "in order to treat peaceably concerning the most important articles of faith, and to ascertain how far they might all agree in the most essential points, for the purpose of promoting mutual love and forbearance."<sup>2</sup> Hence it is scarcely accurate to call these *Pennsylvania Synods*, the first of which met at the house of Theobald Enten in Germantown, and at which Antes presided, January 1st to 3d, *Zinzendorf's Synods*. He was lodging with John Bechtel, and indeed threw himself with all energy into the movement. It reminded him of the Consensus Sendomiriensis,<sup>3</sup> and was, moreover, in accord with the purpose of his own coming to the country. At first the outlook for organic union was encouraging. Every German denomination in Pennsylvania—and not one of these denominations was as yet fully organized for itself—was represented among the more than a hundred members at each of the first conferences. It did appear as though the confessional lines of Europe

<sup>1</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. ii., p. 325.

<sup>2</sup> McMinn, "Antes," p. 111; "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. iii., pp. 13 seq.

<sup>3</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. iii., p. 217.

might be avoided here. Seven such Synods were held within six months. But the beautiful ideal burst like a bubble. After the fourth Synod all except the Lutherans, the Reformed, and the Moravians withdrew, and the denominational differences were intensified. Though the project proved abortive, its conception was worthy of all admiration.<sup>1</sup>

But Zinzendorf's activity was not confined to this effort at union. If his zeal led him into undertakings which seem strange amid conditions that exist to-day, be it remembered that religious affairs were then in an abnormal state among the Germans of Pennsylvania. The Lutherans of Philadelphia, who worshiped in a barn on Arch Street, rented and adapted to religious uses, and enjoyed in common with the Reformed, had been without a pastor for several years, and there seemed to be no prospect of obtaining one. Negotiations with court preacher Ziegenhagen at London, and with the authorities at Halle, had apparently fallen through, owing to the inability of the immigrants to pledge a cash salary. In January<sup>2</sup> the officers (Vorsteher) of the congregation formally requested Zinzendorf to preach for them, and he occupied the pulpit only after ascertaining that Pastor Böhme, of the Reformed congregation, who lived in Wispens township and preached only once a month,<sup>3</sup> had no objection. In February a deputation of the Vorsteher requested Zinzendorf to administer the holy communion to their people.<sup>4</sup> He put them off, to give them time for fuller consideration. At length the preparatory service was held on Palm Sunday, and on Easter day the sacrament was administered accord-

<sup>1</sup> The seven Synods were convened at Germantown, January 1, 1742; at Falkner's Swamp, January 14th; at Oley, February 10th; at Germantown, March 10th; at Germantown, April 6th; at Philadelphia, May 6th; at Philadelphia, June 1st.

<sup>2</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. iii., p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 580.

ing to the Lutheran ritual. A few days previous to this the congregation gave him a formal and regular call to become pastor.<sup>1</sup> Again he desired them to duly consider this step, and propounded various questions, among the rest asking whether there was any one else whom they could secure and whether they were unanimous in their desire. Though he obtained satisfactory replies, it was not till May 26th that the transaction was completed on his part. That his title might not interfere with his ministrations a preliminary had been the renunciation of his hereditary rank at the house of the governor and in the presence of the most prominent men of the colony, on May 15th.<sup>2</sup>

As pastor he conceived it to be within the scope of his functions to appoint, with the consent of his people, Christopher Pyrläus,<sup>3</sup> a former divinity student of Leipzig, as his assistant. At the request of the Vorsteher of the vacant Tulpehocken charge, he recommended to them first Gottlieb Büttner and then Philip Andrew Meurer, the latter erstwhile a student of Jena. He himself also ministered to the Reformed in Philadelphia at their request. But when factious strife arose in Philadelphia in connection with the preaching of Pyrläus, rather than stiffly contend for what he believed his rights, Zinzendorf built out of his own private means a stone church on Race Street for the people who held to him; and from this eventually arose the First Moravian Church in that city. The others held to Mühlenthal, when he appeared toward the close of the year. It is not a historic fact, however, that Zinzendorf was compelled by the court to surrender the church books to him. These books were not given over till after the former had

<sup>1</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. ii., p. 827; vol. iii., p. 581.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii., pp. 330, 331; Reichel, "Memorials of the Moravian Church," p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> "Büdingische Sammlung," vol. iii., p. 82.



left the country—his absence being demanded by the condition of the Moravian Church in Germany—and were handed over by one of the officers who changed sides.<sup>1</sup>

This much in the interest of historic fact. Both Zinzendorf and Mühlenberg, though liable to err like all mortals, were men of God, and have long since learned to see eye to eye; and both divisions of the church of Christ which they represented were providentially ordained and employed.

During the sessions of the seventh Pennsylvania Synod, on June 7th, a colony of Moravians from Europe—known as the “First Sea Congregation,”<sup>2</sup> from the fact that on shipboard these fifty-seven people, who were the sole passengers, were organized as a congregation, and maintained their regular devotional services during the long voyage—arrived in Philadelphia, with Peter Böhler as their leader. They were destined for Nazareth, and for Bethlehem, where Zinzendorf effected the organization of a congregation after the Moravian model on June 25th.

The second half of the year was devoted by him to three missionary tours in the Indian country. The first was to the Minnisinks, the Blue Mountains, the Aquanshicola, and the Upper Schuylkill,<sup>3</sup> from June 24th to August 2d, the most important event in connection with it being an interview with the chiefs of the Six Nations at the house of Conrad Weisser, the Indian agent for government, at Heidelberg. Zinzendorf obtained permission for the Brethren to pass to and from and sojourn as friends within the domains of the great Iroquois confederation and their dependents. The second<sup>4</sup> tour, from August 10th to August 31st, was to

<sup>1</sup> Spangenberg, “Darlegung richtiger Antworten,” p. 152; “Naturelle Reflexiones,” p. 210; MS. letter of Zinzendorf in the Bethlehem Archives, under date of September 13, 1746.

<sup>2</sup> Reichel, “Memorials of the Moravian Church,” pp. 185–187.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23 *seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45 *seq.*



the Mohican town of Shekomeko, about twenty miles southeast of Rhinebeck, N. Y., where Rauch had been successfully laboring since the summer of 1740, the first converts having been baptized at one of the sessions of the Pennsylvania Synod, at Oley, in February, 1741. On August 22d Zinzendorf organized a congregation of ten Christian Indians at Shekomeko. The third<sup>1</sup> journey, from September 24th to November 9th, was to Shamokin, the most important Indian town in Pennsylvania. As a missionary journey this expedition failed of definite results, possibly because of the secret hostility of the notorious Madame Montour, his interpreter. He and his companions were, however, among the first whites to penetrate into the Wyoming Valley.

Shortly afterward tidings from Europe reached Zinzendorf which accelerated his return thither. Before leaving, however, he inaugurated the first form of government for the Moravian Church in America, viz.: Bishop David Nitschmann was to oversee the missions among the Indians, and Peter Böhler, assisted by Seiffert, to supervise the itinerancy. On January 9th the count sailed from New York. The results of his American activity may be summed up thus: congregations at Bethlehem, Nazareth, Philadelphia, Hebron, Heidelberg, Lancaster, and York in Pennsylvania, and in New York City and on Staten Island, were either now already established or developed soon after from movements to which he had given the initiative; schools were founded at Germantown, Fredericktown, Oley, and Heidelberg; an extensive itinerancy was established, and provision made for the systematic prosecution of the missions among the Indians.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PERIOD OF GRADUAL ESTABLISHMENT.

HARDLY had the hundred and twenty persons at Bethlehem adopted rules and regulations when plans were framed for evangelistic activity. For this the membership was so divided that a number became heralds of grace, while the rest labored to provide their support. In July ten men were nominated as "fishers," with instructions never to meddle with the affairs of other servants of God, and to carefully abstain from all disputes. After an absence of a few weeks each was expected to report to the supervisors and again go forth whither he might be sent. Their labors were supplemented by the house-to-house conversations of "visitors," who practically exercised pastoral care over those who affiliated themselves with the Brethren. Their teaching was eminently Christocentric, the vicarious atonement being the all-embracing theme. In this, former Swedish and German Lutherans like Schnell, Reinke, Reutz, Roseen, Bryzelius, Pezold, Meinung, Kaske, and Sölle, quondam Reformed like Antes, Bechtel, Lischy, and Brandmüller, and Scotch, Welsh, and Englishmen like Bruce, Rice, Okely, Powell, Yarrel, Gambold, Thorpe, and Utley, were all at one with those of Bohemian-Moravian stock like Seiffert, Seidel, George Neisser, Joseph Neisser, Jacob Till, Paul Schneider, Paul Münster, and Anton Lawatsch. The many letters, diaries, and journals of those days, preserved in the archives of the Moravian church at Bethlehem, give evidence that a mighty desire

for the Word of God was aroused. By the year 1748 there were thirty-one localities which served as centers of itinerant labors.<sup>1</sup> Jacob Lischy had a circuit embracing eighteen appointments. Christian Henry Rauch attended to fifteen, and David Bruce to ten. Frederick County, Md., became a field of activity in 1745. Leonard Schnell and Robert Hussey penetrated as far as Georgia, and in localities in Virginia and Carolina preached where the gospel had never been heard. Bryzelius, with the consent of Pastor Tranberg, ministered to the vacant Swedish parish of Racoon, and Reinke, Roseen, Rice, Powell, and Nyberg itinerated all through southern New Jersey, while Joseph Shaw and Bruce were active farther north. Seidel and Westmann pushed beyond the Susquehanna. Christian Fröhlich and Jasper Payne were employed on Staten and Long islands. Schnell and Burnside visited Canajoharie. Newport, New Haven, and Broadbay, Me., had their Moravian evangelists.

Since December, 1744, all this activity was superintended by Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg, a man of great intellectual and practical gifts, a theologian and linguist—a favorite scholar of Buddaeus at Jena, he had been led to an experimental knowledge of Christ by a Moravian, Andrew Beier, and since 1733 had been identified with the Unity—and withal a man of indefatigable industry, shrewd foresight, sound judgment, unflinching adherence to principle, and unaffected sincerity in his dealings with all men.

In addition to the care of the itinerancy, his was also the oversight of the missions among the Indians, and to a large extent of those in the West Indies and in Surinam. And the colonists of the church in Pennsylvania deferred to him as their head in temporal affairs. Well did he earn the surname of "Brother Joseph," supporter of his Breth-

<sup>1</sup> Reichel, "The Early History," etc., p. 207.

ren in a strange land, and concealing a tender heart under a rigorous exterior.

For the extraordinary evangelistic and missionary activity demanded extraordinary methods of support. Gradually there had arisen, and after 1744 there prevailed, at Bethlehem and Nazareth and affiliated settlements a system of life that was Spartan in its rigor, and yet voluntarily submitted to for Christ's sake. Though its flaw was the ignoring of the unit of the family, as a temporary expedient there was in it that which challenges admiration. This "Economy," though semi-communistic, was not wholly so, entailing a community of time and labor, but not of personal property. Those who had means of their own did not necessarily surrender them. In return for the time and labor placed at the disposal of the church they received the necessities of life. No private business was transacted, but the manufactures and trades of every sort were carried on for the benefit of the church organization under responsible committees. In addition to a number of farms, thirty-two different industries were in operation by the year 1747. No town in the interior of Pennsylvania could so sufficiently supply all kinds of wants. And although furnishing the support for about fifty itinerants and missionaries, this American branch of Moravian activity was self-supporting and could later send contributions to aid in making good losses in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Associated with Bishop Spangenberg in this period and in the ensuing years were especially Bishop J. C. F. Cammerhof, Adolph Meyer, David Bischoff, Nathanael Seidel, Anton Lawatsch, Henry Antes, Matthew Schropp, and John Brownfield. Abraham Bomper, Timothy Horsefield, and later Henry van Vleck, acted as financial agents in New York.

<sup>1</sup> Plitt, "Geschichte der erneuerten Brüder-Unität," MS., § 289.



The civico-religious life of the settlements was based on the idea of a Christian republic in miniature, in which the offices were largely filled by lot. In the final resort, municipal affairs, as well as religico-disciplinary matters, were referred to the congregation council, which served as the town-meeting, since members of the church were alone allowed to reside permanently in the settlements. The management of externals was vested in a board known as the *Aufsehercollegium*, while in the well-systematized cure and care of souls a joint responsibility was shared by the members of the *Elders' Conference*, to which belonged those men and women who had the special oversight of the divisions of the congregation classified according to age and sex. Regular, though brief, periods of daily devotion, morning, noon, and evening, perpetuated the conception of a complete consecration on the part of the membership.<sup>1</sup> The various committees were assisted by minor functionaries, such as the sick-watchers, the almoners, the sacristans, and the night-watchmen—these last not only insuring the public safety, but also seeking to promote piety by singing hymns appropriate to each hour of the night as they made their rounds.

That this voluntary submission to hard toil and plain fare was engendered by motives of purest devotion becomes plain from the readiness of these people to undertake arduous enterprises at short notice. When, for instance, word was once received that several missionaries had died on the island of St. Thomas, Spangenberg writes he could have had twenty or thirty volunteers ready to set out for this fever-spot.<sup>2</sup>

During these years the sessions of the Pennsylvania

<sup>1</sup> "Diary" of the Bethlehem congregation, MS., Bethlehem Archives, 1742-62.

<sup>2</sup> Reichel, "The Early History," etc., p. 163.

Synod were statedly held, Böhler, and then Spangenberg, being its presiding officer. Varying in membership from about one hundred to one hundred and eighty members, and sometimes even two hundred, though its constituency again nominally embraced as many as eight denominations,<sup>1</sup> the Moravian complexion of the gatherings and the dominance of Moravian thought became more and more evident by the force of circumstances, even if as late as 1746 the theory of union was still formally set forth. Special interest attaches to the third Synod of the year 1745, which met, in December, in the court-house at Lancaster, twenty-four localities being represented—not only because it furnishes an instance of the character of the opposition to the work of the Brethren in the riotous demonstrations of the hostile mob when Spangenberg arose to preach, but especially because its most important transaction was the formation of a society for the propagation of the gospel by home and foreign missions, which died out when Spangenberg's American activity came to an end, but which was resuscitated in 1787 distinctively for the evangelization of the heathen.

Though the gathering in February, 1748, at the Quitapahilla, in Lebanon County, was still called a Pennsylvania Synod, this was the last time that term was employed. It could not be otherwise, for through the labors of Mühlenthal and Schlatter the Lutheran and Reformed churches were assuming organic form. The logic of events compelled the Moravians to cease their pursuit of an unsubstantial, though attractive, ideal. A public recognition of this took place at the twenty-seventh Pennsylvania Synod, practically the first Synod of the Moravian Church in America, convened at Bethlehem in October, 1748, by Bishop John de Watteville, Zinzendorf's son-in-law, in con-

<sup>1</sup> Reichel, "The Early History," etc., pp. 160 *seq.*

nection with an official visitation. Congregations or nuclei of congregations were recognized to exist in thirty-one localities, exclusive of the missions to the Indians.

Unfortunately, together with the recognition of the fact that the day for union was over and that the denominational regulations adopted by the General Synod at Marienborn, in 1745, with respect to the three orders of the ministry, the ritual, etc., must obtain in America also, a temporary phase of thought was allowed to find approval and for a time become dominant. This tendency had been typical of the congregations in Büdingen for a few years past, but, it should be noted, was utterly repudiated a few years hence by the Moravian Church as a whole. The heads of some appear to have been turned by the marvelous successes which had attended their efforts in spite of bitter opposition. They had come to identify the Brethren's Unity with the visible body of Christ. Zinzendorf's flaw of intellectual method, which inclined him to love paradoxical and mystic expressions and to build systems of thought around metaphors that temporarily fascinated him, had led to an unwarranted sentimentalism in the prevalent conception of the atonement, set forth especially in hymns and liturgies.<sup>1</sup> In this he had been strenuously opposed by Spangenberg, Christian David, the Neissers, and others of the old Moravian stock;<sup>2</sup> but for a while in vain. Cammerhof, most worthy of admiration as he was for the irrepressible missionary zeal which caused him to be remembered by the Iroquois for a generation after his early death (April 28, 1751), from the consequences of exposure and hardships experienced on a journey to Onondaga,<sup>3</sup> was an exponent of the fanatical type of thought.

<sup>1</sup> Plitt, "*Geschichte*," etc., § 231; "*Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*," series 2, pp. 175 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Plitt, "*Geschichte*," etc., §§ 229, 246.

<sup>3</sup> "*Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*," series 2, p. 186.

And the visitor was at this time also an ardent advocate of the sentimental phase of religious life.

It might have been expected that Spangenberg would remain at the head of the American activity and continue to administer affairs in connection with which his worth had been signally disclosed. His involuntary retirement to Philadelphia<sup>1</sup> is one of the unexplained problems of Moravian history.<sup>2</sup> In February, 1750, in company with De Watteville, he returned to Europe, where his wife died, in March, 1751. Not many years were to pass, however, before his master-hand was to be again at the helm in America.

<sup>1</sup> "Periodical Accounts," vol. xv., p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Plitt, "Geschichte," etc., § 242.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE ERA OF THE "ECONOMY," 1749-62.

WHILE the formative period in America was drawing to an end, Zinzendorf and his associates, who now lived in London, had been endeavoring to have the status of the *Unitas Fratrum* legally defined, in order to secure freedom of operation in British territory. Rapid advances had everywhere been made. At the Synod of Hirschberg, in Voigtland, in 1743, a total membership in Christendom and heathendom of 20,974 had been reported.<sup>1</sup> These efforts, after protracted negotiations, resulted in an act of Parliament, which received the royal signature on June 6, 1749, recognizing the *Unitas Fratrum* or Moravian Church as an ancient Protestant Episcopal church, and granting certain concessions in Britain and the colonies, e.g., relief from bearing arms and from taking judicial oaths.<sup>2</sup>

The period of the administration of Bishop John Nitschmann, Sr., Spangenberg's successor in America, was brief, and noteworthy for the withdrawal of Henry Antes, who had been of invaluable service in connection with the founding of the settlements. He, however, remained a personal friend of Spangenberg, and consented to be one of a band of explorers for the church in North Carolina, in company with him, a few years later. Moreover he left a legacy in

<sup>1</sup> Plitt, "Geschichte der erneuerten Brüderkirche," MS., § 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Acta Fratrum in Anglia*, 1749; Plitt, § 240; Holmes, "History," vol. i., chap. ii., §§ 4, 5; vol. ii., chap. iii., § 4; chap. iv., § 3; chap. v., § 6.

aid of the mission work, and his sons remained in connection with the Brethren, one of them becoming a missionary in Egypt.

When Spangenberg returned at the close of the year 1751, there came with him an assistant bishop, Matthew Hehl, an alumnus of Tübingen, who was to have special oversight of the congregations in Lancaster, York, and Berks counties, and in Maryland. Moreover they were accompanied by a band of Moravian colonists. And a feature of the succeeding years was the repeated arrival of similar companies, under the lead respectively of Peter Böhler, Lawatsch, Töltschig, Nathanael Seidel, Ludwig Weiss, and Pezold, their transport being provided for in the missionary vessel "Irene," belonging to the church.

An important commission now engaged Spangenberg's attention. Since 1749 negotiations had been pending with Lord Granville for the purchase of lands in North Carolina. An undivided tract of a hundred thousand acres was desired, in the heart of which a town was to be built, with large establishments for various institutions of the church. From this center missions were to be undertaken among the Indians, and the entire territory was to be occupied solely by members of the church, who might give attention to the culture of Christian character and life undisturbed by discordant outside influences.

In August, 1752, Spangenberg, Antes, Timothy Horsefield, Joseph Müller, Hermann Lösch, and John Merck left Bethlehem on horseback. They did not return till the following spring, but, in spite of terrible vicissitudes, had successfully surveyed a desirable tract of well-watered, rolling woodland in the Yadkin Valley. In May, 1753, when Spangenberg reported in London, negotiations with Lord Granville were brought to a close, the purchase-money being raised in England, and the tract named "Wachovia,"

after lands belonging to the Zinzendorf family in Austria. Under instructions from Granville, Governor Dupp recognized it as the Brethren's special diocese. The first settlement was begun on November 17, 1753, by a band of young men sent from Bethlehem, under the lead of Bernard Adam Grube, as minister, and Jacob Lösch, as business manager; and next year, John Jacob Fries being the minister, Böhler on a visit named it Bethabara—"house of passage"—for the original plan of a central town was not abandoned.

The year 1756 was marked by the founding of a new settlement, Lititz, in Pennsylvania, named after the first home of the Unity. George Klein for this purpose made a legal transfer of his farm of four hundred and ninety-one acres to the church, and it became Bishop Hehl's permanent place of residence.

But these were years of severe trial. The prolonged contest for English or French supremacy in the western world involved the border-country in the horrors of Indian war.<sup>1</sup> Repeated atrocities in the Wyoming Valley and along the line of the Blue Mountains announced coming troubles. On the evening of the 24th of November, 1755, the worst fears were realized at the mission station of Gnadenhütten, on the Mahoning. Just as the mission family gathered for the evening meal war-whoops rang out and gunshots followed. But four out of fifteen persons escaped to tell of their companions' martyrdom. And their teachers restrained the converts from attempting reprisals, counseling them to flee instead. For more than a year the refugee "brown hearts" were harbored at Bethlehem, and then built Nain near by.

Other outrages followed the destruction of Gnadenhüt-

<sup>1</sup> Reichel, "Memorials of the Moravian Church," pp. 191 *seq.*; De Schweinitz, "Zeisberger," pp. 220-240.

ten. In consequence several hundred strangers sought refuge in the Moravian settlements. The winter was a most anxious one. The very existence of these towns seemed to be in jeopardy. Minute precautions had to be taken against a surprise by day or night. And despite their serious losses and open-handed hospitality, the Brethren themselves were denounced, by those inimical to their missions, as being secretly in league with the French and the savages. The hostile Indians owed them a special grudge for restraining converted Delawares from going on the war-path. Teedyuscung, the hostile chief, as a renegade convert, bore them special ill-will. Yet when this warrior came to treat with Governors Morris and Denny at Easton, the Brethren were of aid in furthering the negotiations, and in 1758 their missionary, Frederick Post,<sup>1</sup> as agent of the government, traveled as far as the Ohio and rendered signal service in promoting the security of the frontier.<sup>2</sup>

Similar experiences were being made meanwhile in the Southern settlement. It became known from its stockade as the "Dutch Fort," and many refugees found their way thither from the open country, so that, when an interval of peace was enjoyed, another settlement was plotted in the neighborhood—Bethany—to accommodate those of them who wished to remain permanently.

Especially melancholy were the effects of the war upon the hitherto promising Indian missions. Rauch's beginning at Shekomeko in 1740 had branched out into Christian Indian villages at Pachgatgoch, Wechquadnach, and

<sup>1</sup> The MS. "Journal of Post's Tour" is in the Bethlehem Archives. (See also "The Pennsylvania Archives," vol. iii., pp. 520-524.)

<sup>2</sup> "Hostile Indians declared: 'If the great God were not the God of the Brethren, we should soon have made an end of the whites.'"—"Minutes of the Elders' Conference at Bethlehem," January 12, 1756, MS.



Potatic, in Connecticut. Within four years sixty Indians had been baptized. Men like Mack, Büttner, Pyläus, Shawe, Bruce, Post, and Powell were associated in the work, and undertook toilsome and dangerous journeys as far as the Mohawk Valley. In 1745 Spangenberg, Zeisberger, and Schebosch, with Conrad Weisser as interpreter, had penetrated to Onondaga to renew the covenant of friendship established by Zinzendorf, and had obtained a concession of land in the Wyoming Valley, whither a part of the Shekomeko congregation migrated after the passage of the antagonistic acts of the New York Assembly.<sup>1</sup> Thence they had removed to Gnadenhütten, to be nearer the Brethren at Bethlehem; and at the time of De Watteville's visitation about five hundred Indians were reported to be in connection with the church.<sup>2</sup> During the years 1746-48, Martin Mack, Joseph Powell, John Hagen, and Anthony Schmidt had founded an outpost at Shamokin, by the request of Chief Shikellimy. From this point a withdrawal had become inevitable. Though Nain had its counterpart in Wechquetank, just beyond the Blue Mountains, the entire missionary enterprise was now in a precarious state, owing to the spirit of hostility aroused against it among the white colonists, the disastrous effects of which were to be felt at a later period.

So long as Zinzendorf lived, by the force of circumstances and in virtue of a formal commission given him by the representative men in 1743, the guidance of affairs both in Europe and in America devolved upon him in the last resort. But in 1754 the germs of a collegiate government appeared in the appointment of a Board of Administrators, which was given charge of the general finances of

<sup>1</sup> Reichel, "The Early History," etc., pp. 209-212.

<sup>2</sup> Plitt, "Geschichte der erneuerten Brüderkirche," MS., § 242.

the church and its missions. The Synod of 1756 made a further advance by changing this board into a Board of Directors, responsible not to the count personally, but to the church. And these initiatory steps were taken none too soon. For on May 9th, after a brief illness, the great benefactor of the resuscitated *Unitas Fratrum* entered into his rest and reward. He had eccentricities, and, being but a man, made mistakes; but he has left an imperishable name, as one who recalled the church of Christ to the obligation of its missionary commission. He had sacrificed rank, wealth, and the joys of the home circle, and had spent his powers for his Saviour's cause, though it entailed being misunderstood, reproached, and maligned. Correctly estimating the highest aim in life, he never faltered in its pursuit, and was a great man as Heaven counts greatness.

It was impossible to call a General Synod, owing to the operations of the Seven Years' War. Hence an *ad interim* Conference was organized for the oversight of the work at home and abroad, the Board of Directors still continuing to administer the finances.

Spangenberg was naturally needed as a member of this Conference. On his leaving America in the summer of 1762 his duties were shared between Bishop Nathanael Seidel and Frederick William von Marschall; and a radical change followed—the abrogation of the “Economy,” which mode of life had been meant at the outset to be of only temporary duration. The individual members now bought or leased from the church most of the land and the stock and fixtures of most of the various manufactories and trades, and began to do business on their own account. As yet, however, neither the congregations as units, nor the American division of the Unity as a whole, owned any real estate. The church at large remained proprietor of all that individuals did not purchase, and certain enterprises were still

carried on as part of the financial system under the control of the Board of Directors, which had its agents in America. Thus arose an intricate set of accounts, and thus was confirmed the tendency to regard the American field as a mere outpost for the organization, whose center of vitality was on the continent of Europe.

## CHAPTER VI.

### FROM THE ABROGATION OF THE "ECONOMY" TO THE FOUNDING OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC, 1762-83.

ONE immediate effect of the abrogation of the "Economy" was the founding of a boarding-school for boys at Nazareth. In November, 1756, a spacious stone building had been completed as a residence for Count Zinzendorf and the Brethren immediately associated in labor with him. Never used for its intended purpose, it was now utilized for an academy; and under the brilliant principalship of the Rev. F. C. Lembke "Nazareth Hall" attained immediate success. At the close of 1764 one hundred and six scholars were enrolled, with sixteen instructors. But from this time a gradual decline set in, owing to financial straits caused by a renewal of the Indian war. This contest had broken out afresh in 1763. Again the Brethren were falsely charged with supplying the savages with powder and ball. Wechquetank and Nain had to be vacated, owing to the hostility of frontier sentiment, whose violence culminated in the massacre of the Connestoga Indians, and their inhabitants removed to a temporary place of safety on Province Island, in the Delaware, and afterward in the barracks at Philadelphia (January, 1764—March, 1765), where close confinement and unsanitary conditions caused fifty-four of their number to fall a prey to small pox and other fevers.<sup>1</sup>

Meantime, on August 28, 1764, a General Synod convened at Marienborn. Its outcome was the formation of a theocratic republic, in the administration of whose affairs

<sup>1</sup> De Schweinitz, "Life and Times of David Zeisberger," pp. 224 *seq.*



the use of the lot played a most important part. In this republic a General Synod was made supreme, the executive being a board elected by and responsible to it, and modified in 1769 into what was known as the Unity's Elders' Conference. Local management was to be in charge of Elders' Conferences of each congregation, responsible to the central authority.

Especially perplexing for the Synod of 1764 was the financial problem in its relationship to the Zinzendorf estates; for although other moneyed members of the church had placed large sums at its disposal,<sup>1</sup> the count, while exercising unlimited authority, had regarded every financial obligation of the church as his own, and had absolutely devoted all he possessed to the furtherance of its enterprises. Before the law his heirs were now the owners of the Berthelsdorf and Hennersdorf estates, including Herrnhut, with all its important buildings. And yet the debts of the church had been contracted for the Unity by Zinzendorf largely without the positive sanction of others. Hence the church had a moral claim which it was difficult to define. The outcome was an agreement of all concerned that the heirs should be paid a capital of \$90,000 and the church become the owner of the Zinzendorf estates and give the heirs a release from all the debts contracted for the church by Zinzendorf's authority. They amounted to \$773,162, and were not wholly expunged until 1801.

Next year David Nitschmann, the syndic, was dispatched to America, to make known the significance of these transactions and to communicate the measures taken

<sup>1</sup> Especially Counts Von Promnitz, Von Seidlitz, and Reuss, Barons Sigismund Augustus von Gersdorf and Frederick de Watteville, Jonas Paulus Weiss, De Benning, Schellinger, Spangenberg, Dinah Raymond von Larisch, and Mary Crispe Stonehouse.

by those at the head of affairs. The Synod which he, as a representative of the directing board, convened for this purpose at Bethlehem, on May 30th, was noteworthy for the enthusiasm with which the ministers and delegates, one of the latter being an Indian, pledged to do their part.

An important advance was now made in North Carolina. Here Marschall had assumed charge in 1763, and now plotted Salem, as originally designed in the beginning of Wachovia. Through the influx of Brethren from Europe it speedily became for the operations of the church in the South what Bethlehem was in the North, Ettwein, Marschall's assistant, carrying the itinerancy as far as Georgia.

The eighteenth General Synod at Marienborn, in 1769, confirmed the principle that the British and American provinces of the Unity were to be regarded only as outlying subordinate branches, semi-missionary in character. They were to be managed by boards known as Provincial Helpers,' appointed by and responsible to the Unity's Elders' Conference and not to the congregations whose general interests they superintended. The representative principle was very partially recognized, if at all. For a period of about eighty years from this time no American Provincial Synod was empowered to convene—a state of affairs disastrous in a land whose national life was becoming dominated by the just spirit of independence. A complicated financial arrangement was suffered to link the several congregations and the provinces as such with the Unity as a whole. Rules demanded, possibly, by the vexatious alliance of church and state in Europe were made binding in the land of religious liberty, and became shackles. The excessive application of the use of the lot, consequent upon an exaggerated conception of the headship of Christ over the church, and the ascetic regulations

of the choir system intensified the exclusiveness; and the abnormal dread of incurring the charge of proselytism led to a refusal to follow natural and lawful methods of church extension, now recognized and employed by the Moravians as by every other body of evangelical Christians. Had the American congregations been permitted to pursue a natural course of development after Christian Gregor, John Loretz, and Hans Christian Alexander von Schweinitz, early in the seventies, on commission from the general board, solved the most knotty problems involved in the Unity's former ownership of the real estate in America, with a foothold in no less than nine of the colonies, the Moravian Church might have risen with its opportunities and have become a valuable factor in the national life. As it was, the wonder is that it at all held its own.

Even so, however, the negotiations of these Brethren were most opportune at this juncture, for had not a separation of congregational and provincial property been effected from that of the Unity, and the nominal proprietorship and administration of the latter devolved upon naturalized or native-born citizens henceforth, alien ownership might have become a serious matter after the War of Independence. Typical of the agreements entered into by the various settlements was that with the congregation of Bethlehem, in accordance with which it acquired from the Unity almost four thousand acres and the buildings and businesses still belonging to the church by assuming \$87,000 of the debt of the Unity and agreeing to pay a certain sum annually toward the joint necessities of the American Province, North—administrative wants embraced in what was now known as the Sustentation Diacony.<sup>1</sup> Similar arrangements were also made in the Wachovia district.

<sup>1</sup> De Schweinitz, "Financial History of the American Province," pp. 19 *seq.*



In November, 1774, the site for a new settlement was surveyed in New Jersey, near the present town of Oxford, on land purchased from Samuel Green, a member of the church. Known first as Greenland, it in 1775 received the name of Hope. In 1773 and 1775 the Wachovia settlements received additions in the founding of Friedberg and Friedland. To the former the members at Broadbay, Me., soon migrated.

These years were also marked by an effort to renew missionary labor, akin to the first efforts of the Brethren in America. On the invitation of the under-secretary of state in London, Lewis Müller and John George Wagner proceeded via Savannah to his estate at Knoxborough in order to preach to the slaves. Brösing, from Wachovia, joined them in 1775, and a favorable commencement was also made at Silkhope, the estate of a Mr. Habersham. But Müller died of fever the same year, and the outbreak of the war compelled a relinquishment of the post.

In the North the Indian mission had meantime taken mighty strides under David Zeisberger.<sup>1</sup> At the close of the French and Indian War the survivors of confinement in Philadelphia very naturally desired to shun the propinquity of whites. With Zeisberger and Schmick as their spiritual guides, at the suggestion of Chief Papunhank, a convert, they sought his former home at Machwihilusing (Wyalusing), on the north branch of the Susquehanna, and commenced to build a new village, which they named, in fond anticipation, Friedenshütten—"tents of peace." This was in 1765. The indefatigable missionary leader now pressed on, and in 1767, with Gottlob Senseman, began a new mission at Goschgoschünk, on the left bank of the Alleghany, and two years later John Roth com-

<sup>1</sup> Loskiel, part iii., pp. 1-89; De Schweinitz, "Zeisberger," pp. 307-381.



menced Schechschiquanunk, on the Susquehanna. Intolerable persecution of his converts by the heathen wing of their tribe compelled Zeisberger to move, and after a temporary stay at Lawunakhanuck, in 1770, in sixteen canoes, his people, passing the present Pittsburg, pushed into the wilderness and settled Friedensstadt—"city of peace"—in Beaver County. Before this trouble had arisen at Friedenshütten. In 1768 the Iroquois disregarded their covenant with the Moravian Indians, and, though it was no longer theirs, sold land including the settlement to Pennsylvania at the treaty of Fort Stanwix. No wonder Zeisberger therefore in 1770 thankfully accepted the offer of a tract on the Tuscarawas River, Ohio, accompanied as it was with the assurance that it should never be "sold under their feet to the white people."

Delight at the charms of the new home and its treasure of abundant limpid water won for it the well-deserved name of Schönbrunn—"beautiful spring." Heckewelder, not long after, bringing thither the major part of the people of Friedensstadt, a second village was founded about ten miles below, and named by the sadly suggestive name of Gnadenhütten. A third station followed in 1776, Lichtenau—"meadow of light"—in Coshocton County, but was abandoned three years later for Salem, five miles below Gnadenhütten, on account of the frequent passing of war-parties. And now for a time the hearts of the missionaries were made glad. Numerous bands of Indians from all parts visited these villages, and several noted chiefs yielded allegiance to the Prince of Peace. Though the church at Schönbrunn was able to accommodate five hundred persons, it often proved too small. Hundreds of acres were under cultivation, and cattle multiplied. The blanket was laid aside, and the tent gave place to the neat

log cabin. Colonel George Morgan, Indian agent for the Western District, expressed his astonishment at the degree of civilization attained.

At the beginning of the struggle for independence the Brethren were for the most part conservatives or neutrals. Some, however, took the patriotic side, like Von Schweinitz, who in time induced Ettwein to accept the independence of the colonies as a providential development of history. And even before the change in his convictions, the sturdy courage and strong good sense of Ettwein secured for him the friendship of Henry Laurens, Samuel Adams, Hancock, and Washington among the patriot leaders, whose services proved of value to the Brethren in trying times.<sup>1</sup>

Opposed as they were on conscientious grounds to all oaths, an early effect of the hostilities was the cessation of the evangelistic itinerancies. None who declined to take the oath of the Test Act was allowed to proceed north or east of Easton. Thus communications with the authorities of the church in Europe also became very uncertain.

From December 3, 1776, to March 27, 1777, and from September, 1777, to June, 1778, the general hospital of the American army was established at Bethlehem; and at another time the buildings at Lititz were requisitioned for similar purposes. At the Bethlehem hospital Ettwein became chaplain.

Though cheerfully responding to requisitions for supplies, their conscientious scruples with reference to bearing arms also involved the Brethren in serious trouble, and brought on a very heavy financial burden. When notified that unless all males above sixteen years of age presented themselves for military duty on a certain day they would be taxed three pounds and three shillings for each man under fifty years, they paid the tax. As time wore on, however,

<sup>1</sup> "Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society," pp. 257, 258.

the sentiments of the younger men changed, and by them the new order of things was accepted with satisfaction.

Meantime the development of the internal administration of the congregations progressed. Many of the difficulties arising from the circumstances of the times were adjusted by Bishop John Frederick Reichel, a member of the Unity's Elders' Conference, who officially visited the American congregations in the spring of 1779. An important transaction of a conference of ministers over which he presided in April, 1781, previous to his return, was the adoption of the Brotherly Agreement, as the basis of the statutes of the various congregations—a fundamental bond of their union still.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PERIOD OF DOMINANT EUROPEAN INFLUENCE, 1782-1812.

BISHOP NATHANAEL SEIDEL died on May 12, 1782, and Ettwein, his successor at the head of affairs, was consecrated a bishop by John de Watteville, with the assistance of Hehl, on June 25, 1784. De Watteville and his wife had arrived at Philadelphia a few weeks before, after having suffered shipwreck at Barbuda while on their way to visit the missions on the island of Antigua. He was commissioned to communicate to the American congregations the transactions of the General Synod of 1782, at which it had been impossible for an American delegate to be present.

By this Synod the connection of the American congregations with the governing board in Germany had been strengthened, and the dominance of European, and especially of German, Moravian conceptions confirmed. With the abrogation of the Test Act and the assured separation of church and state in the young Republic, there was no reason why the *Unitas Fratrum* in America, after recovering from the financial distresses of the war, should not have entered upon a period of new life and extension. But now operations were cramped by the unwise retention of regulations out of keeping with the national life. Painfully minute attention was given to the development of subjective phases of piety in the exclusive settlements, to



the cramping of energies in other directions. The financial demands of the church's work were met by the proceeds of business enterprises carried on for its benefit, rather than by the voluntary gifts of the people. The use of the German language in worship was perpetuated, to the loss of members in the cities and the keeping of strangers at a distance. Persons who lived away from the settlements but sought the fellowship of the church were formed into societies<sup>1</sup> sustaining only a quasi-connection with it, and not into regular congregations—a usage that had little meaning or purpose in a land free from governmental ecclesiasticism. The laymen had practically no voice in the general management. There was a deficiency of well-qualified ministers. Men of mature years, who were sent from Europe, however scholarly, could not readily adjust themselves to the conditions and spirit of American institutions or appreciate the opportunities which offered. Administrative affairs of highest importance had to be referred to a foreign executive board.

The year 1787 was marked by the resuscitation of the old missionary society of 1745, under the title of the "Society of the United Brethren for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen," its headquarters being at Bethlehem, with Ettwein as president, Von Schweinitz as treasurer, and Jacob van Vleck as secretary. A charter was obtained from the Assembly of Pennsylvania in February, 1788. Ettwein communicated to General Washington an account of the organization of the society, and received a kind and appreciative reply, in which the following sentence occurs: "So far as I am able of judging, the principles upon which the Society is founded, and the rules laid down for its government, appear to be well calculated to promote so laudable and arduous an undertaking; and you will permit me

<sup>1</sup> Holmes, "History," vol. ii., p. 143.

to add that if an event so long and so ardently desired as that of converting the Indians to Christianity and consequently to civilization can be effected, the Society at Bethlehem bids fair to bear a very considerable part in it." <sup>1</sup>

There had been the more need for committing the interests of the missions among the Indians to the care of a legally incorporated society, because in 1782 the flourishing settlements on the Tuscarawas had been destroyed by American militia. Soon after the close of the War of the Revolution, a petition had been presented to Congress, setting forth the great loss to the church through this raid, and asking for an indemnity. Action had been taken in the years 1785 and 1787, to be supplemented by an act in 1796, reserving the sites of these settlements—in all, twelve thousand acres—for the benefit of the Christian Indians and their children forever, and making the tract over to the Society for Propagating the Gospel as their trustee. The distracted state of the country, however, caused the surveying of the land to be postponed till 1797, when it was effected by General Putnam, John Heckewelder, and William Henry. In October, 1798, the venerable Zeisberger and a portion of the converts returned and established a new mission station at Goshen, a few miles from the present New Philadelphia. Since the entire reserve could not be used by the Indians, the society admitted white settlers to the Gnadenhütten and Salem tracts, applying the income thus derived for the benefit of the Indians. John Heckewelder was appointed agent for the society, and Louis Hübner became pastor, to be followed by George Müller. A second congregation was soon formed across the river from Gnadenhütten, and named Beersheba.

During the period covered by these transactions, the

<sup>1</sup> MS. letter in the Bethlehem Archives.

inner life of the congregations was largely uneventful. The Wachovian congregations pursued the even tenor of their way, though the commencement of the tide of emigration westward was already beginning to be felt.

The brief cessation of hostilities in Europe at the Peace of Amiens made possible a General Synod at Herrnhut in 1801. Ultra-conservative tendencies crushed any American desire for adaptation to the needs of the times. Though the firm of Dürninger & Co., of Herrnhut, came to the relief of the church by assuming the remainder of the indebtedness that dated back to Zinzendorf's day, grave apprehensions were awakened by the financial condition of many individual congregations. These new debts were largely attributable to losses occasioned by the Napoleonic wars.

All this had its effect on the American congregations, where the loss of the old leaders was also being felt. In 1802 Ettwein and Marschall died, and also Hans Christian Alexander von Schweinitz, who of the governing board of the Unity best understood American needs. Bishop George Henry Loskiel was sent from Europe as Ettwein's successor, and was assisted by John Gebhard Cunow, who had come to America six years before as administrâtor of the Unity's properties. In the South, Bishop Charles Gotthold Reichel, Lewis Benzien, and Simon Peter were the leaders.

From October 18 to 30, 1802, a conference of ministers met at Bethlehem, at which one especially important measure was adopted—the establishment of a seminary for the training of Moravian ministers in America. Accordingly, in connection with an official visitation from Germany paid by Charles de Forestier and John Renatus Verbeek, in the fall of 1807 Ernst L. Hazelius and John C. Beckler were inducted as professors of the theological seminary, now founded at Nazareth, Pa.

In 1808, on Easter Sunday, what had already been fore-

seen by Von Schweinitz came to pass—the last service was held at Hope, N. J. It had proved a costly failure.

In 1811 Loskiel retired from the Provincial Helpers' Conference, and died at Bethlehem on April 9, 1814, leaving his "History of the Mission among the Indians" as a monument to his memory.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE TRAGEDY OF THE INDIAN MISSIONS, AND NEW EFFORTS IN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH, 1782-1830.<sup>1</sup>

THREE prosperous Christian Indian villages nestled in the fertile Tuscarawas valley, centers of holy influence, whence six devoted men heralded the gospel throughout the wilderness between the two frontiers. The influence of Zeisberger in the councils of the Iroquois and Delawares<sup>s</sup> had been steadily employed to restrain them from sweeping down upon the colonies when the uncertainty of the contest with England must have tempted the Indian to despoil those who had encroached upon his hunting-grounds. But their very neutrality exposed the missionaries and their converts to the hostility of both parties.

On August 10, 1781, a hundred and fifty Indians and whites, under British officers, soon reënforced to three hundred, appeared at Salem. They drove off as prisoners the entire population of the Christian towns, after plundering their homes. In the forests along the Sandusky River the captives were deserted in October, practically without provisions. Soon Zeisberger and his companions were summoned to Detroit as American spies. Their trial, November 9th, resulted in a complete acquittal, but the disaster to the mission could not be made good with a mere word.

<sup>1</sup> Loskiel, "History," etc., pp. 148 *seq.*; De Schweinitz, "Zeisberger," pp. 486 *seq.*; Zeisberger's "Diary," 1781-98.

A dreadful winter was spent on the Sandusky, a pint of corn a day becoming the allowance for each member of the mission family. The extreme cold caused great suffering, and stated worship was hindered by the surrounding savages. At length about a hundred and fifty of the Christian converts obtained permission to return to the Tuscarawas and secure whatever of their unharvested corn might be still standing.<sup>1</sup> This they accomplished beyond their most sanguine expectations, and had planned to set out for the Sandusky on the 7th of March. But they were to experience the dire effects of misplaced American indignation. Although they had repeatedly shown their consistent adherence to non-combatant principles, they were mistakenly identified with the perpetrators of raids and massacres that had horrified the border-settlements during the winter. To avenge these crimes about ninety men, under Colonel Williamson, had set out from the Monongahela. *Inter arma silent leges.* These militiamen arrived on the evening before the Christians were to have commenced their return journey, and were hospitably entertained by the people, who thought they had come to deliver them from the troubles originating in Detroit. The Salem Indians even came to Gnadenhütten to place themselves under the protection of Colonel Williamson. On the morning of the 8th, ninety Christians and six heathen visitors, offering no resistance, whatever, were butchered in cold blood in two buildings wantonly named the "slaughter-houses." Five of them were assistant missionaries. Only two lads escaped to tell the tidings. But the Schönbrunn people had received warning in time and had fled to the Sandusky. On their arrival they found that Zeisberger and his associates had again been summoned to

<sup>1</sup> For the massacre, see Zeisberger's "Diary," pp. 78-82; De Schweinitz, "Zeisberger," pp. 530-557.

Detroit on a renewal of the old charge. Again their innocence was established.

From these misfortunes the mission never really recovered. The Brethren leaders did indeed conduct the remnant by way of Lake St. Clair and the Huron River to the Chipewewa country in Michigan, and founded New Gnadenhütten. After peace had been concluded and Ettwein had secured the grant of land in the Tuscarawas valley, a party of one hundred and seventeen converts set out for their old homes. But they halted at Pilgerruh, on the Cuyahoga, on account of the inveterate hostility of the American public sentiment. At length, after various wanderings caused by Indian wars, Goshen was settled, in 1798, on the Schönbrunn tract, and Zeisberger ministered here, with Edwards as his assistant. In 1792 the veteran had founded Fairfield, on the Thames River, in Ontario, where a considerable part of his people remained.

Nor was the zeal of the Brethren exhausted, in spite of the repeated experience of cruel disaster. On the receipt of an invitation, in the fall of 1800, from the Delawares at Woapi-kamikunk,<sup>1</sup> on a branch of the Wabash River, it was determined to send thither two missionaries and several Indian families. John Peter Kluge, formerly a missionary in Surinam, and Abraham Luckenbach accordingly proceeded to Goshen to study the language and receive instructions from Zeisberger. Next spring, accompanied by ten Christian Indians, they sought their new home. Within a year two converts were won, and soon a little village of ten houses under the chestnut-trees surrounded the church, and a congregation of twenty-three members gave bright promise. But on the death of the friendly chief and the deposition of his like-minded successor, the schemes of white rumsellers and Indian medicine-men provoked the hostility of the

<sup>1</sup> "Periodical Accounts," vol. ii., pp. 500 *seq.*; vol. xx., pp. 397 *seq.*



heathen. In 1805 dangers thickened. A certain Shawnee, who had ingratiated himself into the favor of the tribe, claimed that he could detect wizards and poisoners. The old chief, Tettepachsit, was accused by this man, and roasted at a slow fire. He sought to shield himself by alleging that the poison was kept in the house of Joshua, the interpreter of the missionaries. Joshua was also burned at the stake, meeting his fate with a Christian martyr's confidence. The missionaries barely escaped with their lives, and the mission had to be abandoned.

In the South the original purpose of the settlement in Georgia had never been wholly forgotten. On three several occasions after the withdrawal to Pennsylvania, missions among the Cherokees, Catawbas, Chickasaws, and Creeks had been projected, but unsuccessfully, owing to the wars. At last, in 1799 and 1800, journeys of exploration were undertaken by Abraham Steiner and Frederick von Schweinitz, of Salem, N. C., which led to the founding of a mission among the Cherokees at Springplace,<sup>1</sup> in what is now Murray County, Ga., by Abraham Steiner and Gottlieb Byhan in 1801. Next year Jacob Wohlfarth joined them, and on Steiner's return, in 1802 also, John Gambold took his place. Wohlfarth died in 1807, before the first-fruits had been gathered, for the intricacies of the Cherokee tongue long proved a hindrance. But after the first baptism, in 1811, gratifying progress was made. Meanwhile, in 1807, a second station was established by Karsten Petersen and Christian Burghardt in the country of the Creeks, John F. Holland becoming the third missionary here, at Oochgeology, on the Flint River, in Gordon County.

From Fairfield, in Ontario, Haven and Oppelt in 1804 proceeded to the Pettquotting, in Erie County, O., to re-

<sup>1</sup> "Periodical Accounts," vol. xxviii., pp. 323-327.



new the former station of New Salem, begun in 1787 and abandoned in 1789. But the hardening intercourse with vile whites, and the old curse of rum, made the people irksome of all restraints. This was a source of special grief to the aged Zeisberger. Eighty-seven years of age, he entered into his rest on November 17, 1808, at Goshen. In his sixty-two years of marvelous missionary toil he had labored among thirteen tribes. Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Ontario had witnessed his itinerancies. Translations of the Bible and the Moravian hymnal and liturgy into the Delaware, and various Delaware and Onondaga grammars and lexicons, had formed a part of his literary labors. Hundreds of Indians had been baptized by him and won to a consistent Christian life.<sup>1</sup>

Though much of his work had been sadly neutralized by the folly and selfishness and sin of whites, one of his missions was at this time a source of joy. Fairfield was prospering. Some years before, the commandant of Detroit<sup>2</sup> had declared that through the industry of this settlement the price of many of the necessities of life had been reduced. Two fifths of the corn and much of the beef purchased by the Northwest Fur Company came from the farms of the Fairfield Indians.

But this charming Christian idyl was to be rudely shattered. The War of 1812 aroused grave apprehensions. When Detroit was occupied by General Harrison, the missionaries dreaded the worst; especially after the British turned the church into a hospital, and General Proctor announced his intention to fortify the place. The Indian congregation took to the woods; and none too soon, for

<sup>1</sup> De Schweinitz, "Zeisberger," pp. 686 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> "Periodical Accounts," vol. ii., p. 334.

on October 5, 1813, the battle of the Thames was fought in the vicinity. Then the victorious Americans, mistaking the character of the place, gave it to the flames.<sup>1</sup> Not a house was left standing. The missionaries Jung and Schnall toiled back to Bethlehem heart-sick. Denke camped with the fugitive converts, as they wandered through the forests, and with them was exposed to the violence of Kickapoo and Shawnee raiders. For a couple of years he had no tidings from his Brethren. Not till the close of the war was a return to the Thames practicable. Then New Fairfield was built on the opposite bank, and in 1816 numbered about thirty houses, with one hundred and twenty professing Christians.

After this there was a gradual disintegration of Goshen, owing to the increasing propinquity of whites. New Fairfield indeed became the gainer by this, and received the last remnants of the Moravian Indians of Ohio. In 1824, the Society for Propagating the Gospel having annually spent for improvements on the Tuscarawas Reservation large sums above the receipts from the lands, with the consent of the Indians retroceded it to the United States government, on condition that the Christian Indians should receive a per capita annuity of four hundred dollars, or a new grant of twenty-four thousand acres.<sup>2</sup> Not that missionary activity ceased. The first official periodical publication of the American Moravian Church had only recently been launched—the “Missionary Intelligencer,” a quarterly, first issued in 1822. In the following year, to provide for the closer superintendence of the Cherokee mission, the “Society of the United Brethren in North Carolina for the Furtherance of the Gospel” was organized. And in 1825

<sup>1</sup> “Missionary Intelligencer,” 1854, p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> De Schweinitz, “Historical Sketch of the Society for Propagating the Gospel.”

the parent society received an endowment which made it henceforth an important factor in the general missionary enterprises of the Moravian Church. This was a legacy devised by Godfrey Haga, a retired merchant of Philadelphia and a member of the society, estimated at about \$220,000, of which \$20,000 were to be held in trust for the education of ministers.

Unfortunately, just when the church was in a position to prosecute its enterprises with vigor, national relations with the Indians again took an untoward course. Prosperity had been attending the work among the Cherokees. Among the converts were some of the most influential leaders of the nation. A powerful revival had characterized the winter of 1824-25.<sup>1</sup> The English language had gained precedence as the language in which their national records were kept. Hunting had been largely exchanged for agriculture. Agricultural implements, mills, machinery for cleaning cotton, etc., had been introduced.<sup>2</sup> The people of the upper towns desired to assimilate with the Americans, and those who clung to the hunter's life had begun their exodus to the West. Now it was that Georgia, disregarding the solemn treaties made by the general government in 1785, 1791, 1798, etc., sought to extend the jurisdiction of the State over the eight thousand square miles of Cherokee territory, and refusing the Indians the right of citizenship and of being heard in the courts, sought to compel their total removal. Nor did the United States seem disposed to cast about its wards the protection of federal law. Manifestly storm-clouds were gathering, and, in breaking, the tornado might be expected to sweep away all vestiges of the labors of Moravian, Congregationalist, Baptist, and Methodist missionaries.

<sup>1</sup> "Periodical Accounts," vol. ix., p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. vii., p. 220.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION, 1813-48.

AN arrangement by which the financial status of the Moravian Church in Europe and America could be mutually affected for good or ill by events transpiring on distant continents, and methods of administration which failed to take account of the development of national characteristics, while ignoring opportunities conditioned by diversified relations of church and state, could not remain in perpetuity. Inkings of the coming changes might be found by the observant in the abrogation of the "Brethren's Houses" as integral parts of the individual settlements in America during the second decade of the century. As in Britain, these buildings were utilized for educational purposes in several instances.

The necessity for changes came to the surface at the first General Synod held after the Peace of Paris, in Herrnhut, in the year 1818, when the debt of the church was reported to be \$660,000. Moreover it was then evident that a halt had to be called in respect to the wide use of the lot. The American delegates had been instructed to have it abrogated in connection with the approval of marriages of members, and obtained their request as far as their province was concerned. The rite of foot-washing was also abolished.

Nor were these changes made any too soon; for since the beginning of the century the Unity had been losing members in the home field, and especially in America.



Donegal, in Pennsylvania, and Hope and Woolwich, in New Jersey, had been abandoned. Gnadenthal, Christianspring, and Friedensthal had been merged into Nazareth. The people of Gnadenhütten, on the Mahoning, had moved to Beersheba, in Ohio, to be finally merged into the new Gnadenhütten in 1824. Of new enterprises to offset all this, mention can only be made of the building of a church at Sharon, near Goshen, in 1815, by Jacob Blickensderfer, and the organization of efforts on behalf of the negroes of Salem, N. C., by Abraham Steiner, with the erection of a church in 1823. For a time the prospects of this mission were very bright; but a painful interruption was soon experienced from the effects of an act passed by the State legislature, prohibiting the imparting of any form of education to the negroes.

Undesigned coincidences, and leadings of Providence, rather than the formulation of any new policy, were destined to furnish the points for the crystallization of the radical changes that were inevitable.

Since 1825 a number of Moravians from North Carolina had settled in what is now Bartholomew County, Ind. In November, 1829, a zealous layman who had been licensed to preach in consequence of activity in the Sunday-school and other evangelistic labors—Martin Hauser—had come from Salem for the purpose of gathering these scattered families into a congregation. His appeal to the Northern board for aid, in the following year, had been favorably entertained. Land was bought, and at Goshen, later Hope, a congregation organized in 1831 by Louis David de Schweinitz, the administrator of the Unity's property, who had been sent to inspect the prospects.

Among the hills of eastern New York, forty-six miles northeast of Albany, and near the line of Vermont, at Camden Valley, the people were well-nigh without gospel

privileges. Among them were descendants of Abraham Büniger, one time missionary among the Indians at Pachgatgoch, who had made his home in the primeval wilderness here in 1770. They applied for a minister in 1830, and the Rev. Charles Blech, who was sent, succeeded in building a church in 1834.

In 1836 a third new field was entered, the southern portion of Wayne County, Pa., where Hopedale was organized by the Rev. Emanuel Rondthaler, of Nazareth, among emigrants from Baden, who had known of the Moravian Church in Europe.

In the South, the United Brethren's Home Missionary Society of North Carolina was founded in 1835, to further the evangelistic efforts for some time already prosecuted in the mountains of what is now West Virginia by Vanne-man Zevilly, from which resulted the congregation of Mount Bethel.

The beginnings of Dover, O., West Salem, Ill., Enon, Ind., and an attempt in New Philadelphia, O., now followed in rapid succession. The settlement of the second of these, in 1844, involved the breaking of virgin soil and the erection of the log cabins of pioneers, and again the indefatigable Hauser was willing to take the lead, and to sacrifice his own and his family's prospects for the welfare of the church.

Thus indication after indication was given that the time had come for the acknowledgment of a revolution in spirit and method. Nowhere was this more thoroughly felt than at Bethlehem, the center of influence. Here a vote of the church council, on January 11, 1844, decided upon the abolition of the peculiar institutions of the exclusive religious establishment; and this proved the initial step to a decisive determination of the character of the modern American Moravian Church. However, before the Unitas

Fratrum in America could be fully free to adapt itself to the genius and institutions of the country, it needed to acquire practical independence of the central authorities in Germany by the consent of a General Synod and through the remodeling of the constitution of the Unity. Very important preparation for this was made at a conference of the ministers in the North convened at Bethlehem from May 4 to 20, 1847. The whole status of the church came under discussion. Provision was made, subject to ratification by the General Synod, for the convening of a Provincial Synod at stated intervals, to which the board known as the Provincial Helpers' Conference should be more measurably responsible. Hitherto wholly appointed by the authorities in Germany, acting as their agents, and sometimes composed of men who had reached advanced years without any personal acquaintance with America before assuming office, the American executive board was henceforth to be elected by the American Synod, except that the administrator, as manager of the Unity's property, should *ex officio* be the third member. This inconsistency was necessitated by financial circumstances. There remained considerable estates not yet transferred from the church as a whole. The congregations in the North and in the South constituted two distinct units, though subordinate to and involved in the general financial body of the church. Each of these provincial divisions, having its own executive management, as such had to meet sundry general expenses—the salarizing of members of the executive board, the appointment, transfer, and pensioning of ministers, the rendering of aid to weak congregations, the financial care of the educational institutions, church publications, etc. But as the accounts of separate congregations also brought them into financial relations with the administrator in his double capacity of provincial treasurer and of agent

for the Unity at large, the consequent intricacies of the financial system could not be at once set aside.

In the midst of the uncertainty and anxiety occasioned by the shocks of revolution which distressed the continent of Europe in 1848, the General Synod met at Herrnhut in May. America was represented by Bishop Peter Wolle and the Revs. John C. Jacobson, Henry Augustus Shultz, David Bigler, and George Frederick Bahnson from the North, and Bishop William Henry van Vleck and the Rev. Charles Frederick Kluge from the South. In the course of its deliberations, the Synod gave expression to its recognition of the vast field of opportunity before the Moravian Church in America among the ever-increasing number of German immigrants.<sup>1</sup> The requests of the American Province were granted, with the proviso that the two elected members of the executive board should be approved by the lot, and that the Unity's Elders' Conference should appoint one of them president, and, further, that the right of individual members or officials or boards of congregations to deal directly with the Unity's Elders' Conference be guaranteed.

<sup>1</sup> "Synodal Verlass," 1848, pp. 208, 209, 241-244.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE ERA OF HOME MISSIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, 1848-60.

To take advantage of the measure of independence which had been achieved, a Provincial Synod was convened in Bethlehem, in June, 1849. Bishop J. C. Jacobson, subsequently its president, and the Rev. Henry A. Shultz were elected members of the new executive board, the Rev. Philip H. Goepp, as administrator, being *ex officio* the third. Provision was made for the readjustment of the general finances and of the relationship of the several congregations to their joint obligations. A monthly periodical, the "Moravian Church Miscellany," was founded, and the publication of a new edition of the hymnal arranged for. But most significant was the attitude of the Synod over against a policy of vigorous church extension.

A Home Missionary Society<sup>1</sup> had previously been called into existence in March, chiefly by the exertions of Henry A. Shultz, its first president. To the eleven members of its board of managers, only three of whom were ministers, Synod committed the general oversight of the work of extension, with the proviso that each appointment of a home missionary must have the approval and sanction of the Provincial Elders' Conference. The formation of auxiliary

<sup>1</sup> The "Moravian," August 1, 1871; "Moravian Church Miscellany," 1850, p. 191.

societies in the various congregations speedily followed, though some of these preferred to support distinct missions of their own.

A call was now given to the Rev. John Frederick Fett, hitherto doing evangelistic work among the Germans of Philadelphia, and formerly active in the "Diaspora" of the Moravian Church in Switzerland, to prospect among the Germans of the Northwest. Correspondence had previously been exchanged with Andrew M. Iverson, of Milwaukee, a Norwegian, educated in the Mission Institute at Stavanger, who was ministering to a small congregation of Scandinavians and with them desired admission to the fellowship of the Moravian Church. On Fett's recommendation, this request was granted and Iverson ordained. Fett's former station in Philadelphia was occupied by the Rev. Philip H. Gapp. The Rev. C. Pfohl, who had already been in charge of an extensive circuit in Hendricks County, Ind., came into connection with the board, and Heinrich Lauenroth was sent to the Germans of Cleveland. In June, 1850, Fett, in company with the Rev. Otto Tank, formerly missionary in Surinam, visited Green Bay, Wis., and the result was the establishment of a Moravian home mission there in 1851. On the opposite bank of the Fox River, at Fort Howard, and also on the road from Fort Howard to Depere, with the assistance of Tank, Iverson's Norwegians formed settlements. In January, 1851, Charles Barstow, Pfohl's successor, extended his circuit into Putnam and Morgan counties, and in time organized Coatesville. Meanwhile Hauser was most active at West Salem, Olney, Mount Carmel, and Albion, in southern Illinois.

In October, 1851, Rev. John G. Kaltenbrunn, formerly of Neusalz, in Silesia, began home mission work among the Germans of New York City, and in the following year, though not under the auspices of the parent society, a commence-

ment of Moravian services was made in Brooklyn by the Revs. John F. Warman and David Bigler.

In the spring of 1853 Kaltenbrunn was sent on a tour of exploration to Watertown, Wis., and its vicinity. Upon his reporting favorably, a number of his New York members resolved to emigrate thither, with the assistance of the Home Missionary Society of the Moravian Church in that city, which promised to secure forty acres of land and support the missionary for one year. Thus Ebenezer, near Watertown, was founded. Kaltenbrunn's place was taken by Ulrich Günther, of late a colporteur of the New York Tract Society, who found opportunity to preach at Greenville, N. J., in addition to attending to his city charge.

Reiterated calls for the services of the Moravian Church now came from New Haven, Utica, and New Orleans. The second of these was supplied in June, 1854, by Valentine Müller, a colporteur of the American Tract Society at Rochester. Gapp and Praeger, from Philadelphia, began services at Palmyra, Camden, and Centreville, N. J.

Kaltenbrunn's successes had made it possible for Lake Mills to bud out into a charge distinct from Ebenezer in June, 1756, under the pastoral care of F. J. Kilian, with two filials, North Salem and Newville, ere long. At Utica J. J. Detterer followed Müller in the same year and met with large success. Günther's first visit to New Haven, in 1853, branched into quite an extensive activity in New England, where Leonard Rau and William Geyer had appointments among the Germans of New Haven, Providence, Norwich, Worcester, Webster, Clinton, Woonsocket, and Attleborough. In October, 1857, Martin A. Erdman was sent to Chaska, Minn., whither several former members of the Hopedale church had removed, and also began Henderson, about six miles distant.

In 1855 the Provincial Synod made a change in the ad-



ministration of this entire work, placing it in charge of a Home Mission Board consisting jointly of the Provincial Elders' Conference and eight other members specially elected by Synod. But the new system did not put an end to the association at Bethlehem, which had been the parent society. It resumed its original form as a local organization taking charge of certain specific portions of the general field. The same held good in a similar manner of the former auxiliary societies at Philadelphia and Nazareth.

Meantime important constitutional changes were being effected whereby provision was made for provincial independence. The General Synod of 1857, in particular, made possible for the American church a career of untrammelled usefulness. The initiative had been taken by the Provincial Synod of 1855, held at Bethlehem, and constituted of twenty-six clergymen and thirty-three lay members. Content to retain former terms and designations, it demanded that the right to self-government should be conceded, and that for each province of the church the supreme authority in provincial affairs should be vested in the Provincial Synod, constituted of ministers and laymen, and relegating its power in the intervals between its assembling to an elected executive board of ministers known as the Provincial Elders' Conference. The first incumbents of this office, Bishop Jacobson and the Revs. Sylvester Wolle and Philip H. Goepp, were then elected in accordance with these tentative measures. The occasions when recourse should be had to the use of the lot were so defined as to make it the exception and not the rule in administrative affairs. It was resolved to found a weekly church paper, the "*Moravian*," and establish a publication house and book-store in Philadelphia, the former to be edited by the Rev. Edmund de Schweinitz, with power to secure associates, and the latter to be under the superintendence of



Francis Jordan. Finally Synod resolved to found a college in connection with the theological seminary, and for the use of the double institution purchased the Whitefield House at Nazareth.

Though this radical legislation, elaborated in the succeeding Provincial Synod of 1856, aroused much feeling throughout the various sections of the Moravian Church, the General Synod of 1857, at which the American church was represented, in addition to the Rev. Charles Frederick Kluge, the vice-president of the Synod, by the Revs. Philip H. Goepf, Lewis F. Kampmann, Edmund de Schweinitz, Edwin T. Senseman, Eugene A. Früauff, Emil de Schweinitz, Levin T. Reichel, and S. T. Pfohl, after a very full and frank discussion, practically fell in with the American suggestions. Parity of representation by elected delegates at the General Synods was conceded to the three provinces, as well as self-government in provincial affairs, with the reservation of a right of appeal to the Unity's Elders' Conference. Fortunately questions of property had not become involved to any extent, and the common bond of the work of evangelization among the heathen was left undisturbed.

In order to carry out the provisions of this new constitution, the Provincial Synod of the American church, North, convened at Bethlehem on June 2, 1858, and a provincial constitution was adopted, fundamental to which were triennial Synods, and a Provincial Elders' Conference of three members, with a six years' term of office, empowered to make all appointments to ministerial positions, administer the provincial funds, and serve, in short, as general executive.

In connection with the gradual emergence into independence, special importance attaches to the capitalization of the Sustentation Fund. The conditions of purchase by which the old-settlement congregations during the years 1770-75 had acquired from the Unity a title to

their real estate had included a pledge to pay certain sums annually toward the common needs of the province as a whole, embraced in two divisions, known as the Sustentation Diacony and the Educational Diacony. The former provided the salaries of certain provincial officers, assisted pastors who received an inadequate support, and supplied the pensions of the superannuated. The latter was charged with the accounts of the educational work of the church, and in particular made provision for the education of ministers' children. Furthermore, the agreement took cognizance of the probable increase in the value of the real estate by requiring that in the event of such an increase these congregations should apply a proportionate part of the gain in such a way that the American Province as a whole might reap a share in the benefit. After the abrogation of the exclusive system, the rise of real estate rapidly improved the status of the landed congregations. Indebtedness to the Unity was paid off. Then, in 1851, Bethlehem, and, soon after, Nazareth and Lititz, abolished all vestiges of the quasi-communal system for ecclesiastical finances; incorporation was secured, and final settlement made with the Province to redeem pledges with reference to the rise in value and all annual grants by one gift. Recognition was indeed made of the obligation to still regard the congregational endowments as a trust to be employed, not for selfish easement, but as an increment of latent power to be developed for the advantage of the whole church. By these transactions Bethlehem made over about \$116,000, to constitute what could now be termed a Sustentation Fund; Nazareth, about \$59,000; and Lititz, \$20,000. These moneys were to be administered as a trust by the Provincial Conference, and the income applied to all the uses of the former Sustentation and Educational Diaconies, including the defrayal of expenses

of the theological seminary not otherwise provided for, and the meeting of deficits in connection with the church publications. Hence the progress of the church became inseparably connected with the condition of the Sustentation Fund.

Three acts of the Synod of 1858 remain yet to be noted: the removal of the book-store, with the "Moravian," the Rev. E. T. Senseman being editor since 1859, from Philadelphia to Bethlehem, where the German "Brüderblatt" was also issued, the Rev. Charles F. Seidel and then the Revs. Theophilus Wunderling and John C. Brickenstein being editors; the removal of the college and theological seminary to Bethlehem, with the Rev. L. F. Kampmann as president; and the publication of the "Moravian Manual," a compend of the constitution, statutes, and ritual of the Moravian Church, by the Rev. Edmund de Schweinitz, in 1859. The first two of these measures reestablished and confirmed the importance of Bethlehem as the center of Moravian influence, and the third made it possible for the Christian world to easily form an intelligent estimate of Moravianism.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE INDIAN MISSIONS, 1830-66.

FOR the Cherokee nation forceful removal from its constantly widening acreage of well-tilled land seemed inevitable, unless the federal authority intervened to check the rapacity of Georgia. Orders were issued enjoining all whites to vacate the Cherokee country by March, 1833, exceptions being made in the case of officials of the State or of the United States only.

This compelled the withdrawal of all the missionaries except Gottlieb Byhan, who was screened by his appointment as United States postmaster at Springplace. His arrest, but speedy release, followed. The other missionaries found a temporary home with Captain McNair, across the border of Tennessee. Continuing to visit his charge, the Rev. Henry G. Clauder was arrested on March 31st by Georgia guards under Captain Nelson. A temporary release was followed by a peremptory notice, in July, to leave the country within ten days. Next year he indeed returned to Springplace by virtue of succeeding Byhan as postmaster; and during the entire period of anxiety services were maintained at Oochgeloogy by Abraham Hicks and Christian David Wattee, native assistants. But when the State of Georgia divided the Cherokee country among the whites by lottery, the mission property at the latter place was forcibly seized by strangers, and on New-Year's day, 1833, three families compelled Clauder to give up half



of the mission house at Springplace, and a few days later a so-called agent of the State government expelled both the missionary and the intruders. Springplace became a county-seat and the mission church its court-house.

Again McNair accorded a friendly welcome and provided a temporary center for missionary operations, placing a house and a plot of ground at the disposal of his guests. But in 1837 the compulsory deportation took place, under the superintendence of United States troops commanded by General Scott. Thirteen thousand exiles were removed west of the Mississippi during the fall of this year. Chief John Ross, or Kroweskowee, the head of the nation, a well-educated Christian gentleman, and attached to the Moravian Church by various ties, could give no assurance that the missionaries would be permitted to rejoin them. Notwithstanding this, in September, 1838, Renatus Smith, Miles Vogler, and Herman Ruede were sent to the Barren Fork of the Illinois, a tributary of the Arkansas, where a number of the former members were gathered.

During 1840 and 1841 the continued experience of ill health caused a removal of most of the people to Beattie's Prairie, where a church known as Canaan was next erected. With the coming of additional missionaries, David Zeisberger Smith and Gilbert Bishop, the founding of a second station was possible, New Springplace, served by Bishop and Ruede. The year 1846 was marked by a notable revival; but in August and September Smith and Bishop lost their wives from fever. Edwin J. Mack and Allanson E. Wohlfarth were soon after sent out as assistants, and this addition made it possible to accede to the wishes of the people in supplying Mount Zion as a third station, recently abandoned by the American Board.

Connection with the home churches was to have been strengthened by a visit of inspection on the part of Bishop

John G. Hermann, in the summer of 1854. But the journey thither from Salem, N. C., by private conveyance, proved too arduous for a man advanced in life, and on the way home he succumbed to typhus fever in a lonely district of Arkansas.

A second visitor, the Rev. G. F. Bahnson, who successfully effected the desired inspection four years later, expressed views regarding the mission that were full of hope, and gave it as his belief that ere long it might be served by native laborers.

But again the story of Moravian missions among the Indians was to be tinged with the sanguine hue of border strife. At the outbreak of the Civil War, its geographical position involved the Indian Territory in the struggle. Remembering Georgia's treatment of their race, the majority of the Cherokees sided with the North. Lawless bands roamed about and plundered and ravaged.<sup>1</sup> On September 2, 1862, Ward, a native assistant missionary, was shot by Indians as a supposed Southern sympathizer, and New Springplace was pillaged. Bishop was arrested by a subordinate officer, and threatened with hanging as "a conservative." But friendly Indians interposed, knowing him to be a Pennsylvanian; and in two weeks he was released by the express order of General Blunt. Meantime his wife and Ward's widow, with their children, underwent great hardships. But at last Bishop was reunited to his family and made his way home to the North. At Canaan, which had not suffered so severely, Mack for a time held his ground, and sheltered Mrs. Ward and her children till they left for West Salem, Ill. Here, in spite of every kind attention, she soon sank under her burden of sorrow and fatigue. Mack was also compelled to leave, and settled in Missouri; the station at Canaan was completely destroyed,

<sup>1</sup> "Periodical Accounts," vol. xxviii., p. 324.

and the members scattered. It seemed as if the Cherokee mission had met its death-blow.

But after the war, on commission of the Provincial Elders' Conference in Salem, Mack returned on a tour of investigation, and, reporting favorably, was appointed to recommence the mission in 1866, reoccupying New Spring-place in hope against hope.

About the time of the removal of the Cherokees to the West, an eventful change transpired for the Delawares of New Fairfield, in Ontario. In July, 1837, two thirds of their number, about two hundred and thirty souls, proceeded to Detroit in canoes, accompanied by the Rev. Jesse Vogler. Their objective was Missouri; but the majority wintered at Lake Winnebago, while a smaller number pushed on with Vogler to the vicinity of the present Kansas City, where next year the settlement of Westfield was established, and the Winnebago contingent, augmented by people of several tribes, joined them. Varied fortunes followed, and it became evident, from a government survey in 1851,<sup>1</sup> that the land on which the Christian Indians were living was the property of the Wyandottes, and that those from whom they thought they had regularly acquired permission to settle had not been the lawful owners in the first instance. Removal from Westfield became a necessity. Now the claim of the Moravian Delawares, based on the retrocession of the lands on the Tuscarawas, was revived, and measurably acknowledged by the government. A tract six miles from Fort Leavenworth was assigned them—but only twenty-five hundred acres and \$1600 as an equivalent for the twenty-four thousand acres of the old agreement. And the removal was attended with an epidemic of fevers. The new mission was placed in charge of Smith, who had previously been transferred from Indian

<sup>1</sup> "Periodical Accounts," vol. xx., pp. 111 *seq.*

Territory, and Peter Ricksecker, formerly missionary in the West Indies.

During this period New Fairfield, in Ontario, was maintained without interruption, though with repeated changes in the missionary force. Necessarily circumscribed in scope, and confined to the narrow bounds of the Reserve, striking features in the religious life of the place were not to be expected, though the gradual advance in civilization and industry was gratifying.



## CHAPTER XII.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENT.

THE growth of the Moravian Church in America since the adoption of the modern constitution has been, on the whole, steady and consistent. The 5300 communicant members at the close of 1858 have increased to 12,535, and the total membership has risen from 8275 to 19,497. Though the enterprise in New England did not attain permanence, the last point held, New Haven, being abandoned in 1868, success has attended the work elsewhere, so that congregations and home missions now exist in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, North Carolina, and Virginia. During the last ten years special progress has been made in the South.

In April, 1866, "Der Brüder Botschafter," a German weekly, was founded at Bethlehem, and since then two monthly illustrated children's papers have been added, the "Little Missionary" and "Der Missions Freund." A new publication house was occupied here in 1871, from which have been issued various editions of hymnals and works characteristic of a denominational printing-office. Its most important publication was given to the public in 1885, the masterly "History of the Church Known as the Unitas Fratrum," by Bishop Edmund de Schweinitz, S.T.D., a work invaluable to a correct understanding of the rise, progress, position, and life of the Moravian Church before

1722. The death of the author, in December, 1887, identified as he had been with the progress of affairs since the fifties, was felt to be a serious loss.

The prosperity of the educational enterprises has fluctuated. Although for a time hopeful promise attended a boys' academy established at Chaska, Minn., in 1864, and a young ladies' seminary opened at Hope, Ind., in 1866, neither proved permanent successes, the former being closed in 1867 and the latter in 1881. During the years immediately after the war the older church schools in the East flourished; but the panic of 1873 was severely felt by them. Equipped and conducted as they<sup>1</sup> now are in accordance with modern requirements, it is reasonably expected that the marked popularity which has characterized Salem Female Academy<sup>2</sup> will have its counterpart in the Northern schools. For the college and theological seminary at Bethlehem, the period since 1881, when its interests were separated from the Sustentation Fund, has been one of steady advance. Since 1884 the Rev. A. Schultze, D.D., has been its president. Through the liberality of the membership of the entire Moravian Church in America admirable new buildings were erected in 1892. The fall of 1893 saw the consecration of the Helen Stadiger Borhek Memorial Chapel for its uses, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ashton C. Borhek, of Bethlehem, Pa., in memory of their deceased daughter. Meantime the permanent endowment fund has risen from about \$40,000 in 1881 to \$114,519 in 1893.

In 1868 the Southern congregations made overtures for union with the Northern, the separation in 1771 having

<sup>1</sup> The Moravian Seminary for Young Ladies, at Bethlehem, Pa., founded, 1749, reorganized, 1785. Nazareth Hall, a boarding-school for boys, at Nazareth, Pa., established, 1759, reorganized, 1785. Linden Hall Seminary, a boarding-school for girls, at Lititz, Pa., founded, 1794.

<sup>2</sup> For girls, at Salem, N. C., founded, 1802.

been made, not as a matter of principle, but owing to the uncertainties of communication with the center at Bethlehem. But although the proposals were seriously entertained, and after the Northern Synod of 1881 it appeared as if union would be consummated, it ultimately failed of accomplishment. Though administrative unity was not achieved, there exists practical union in the joint support of the one theological seminary and in the common use of the denominational literature issued from the publication house at Bethlehem.

The church in the North meanwhile began to follow its destiny by mapping out districts, in 1870, for the systematic subdivision of administration. This was utilized in connection with the adoption of a more aggressive policy in 1876, when a distinct Board of Church Extension, with clerical and lay members, was created and charged with the establishment of a permanent Church Extension Fund, auxiliary boards being appointed in the districts; and in 1888 it was carried to its logical conclusion by the establishment of District Synods for local and subordinate legislation.

At the Northern Synod of 1881, the Sustentation Fund, whose varied uses had been severely taxed in consequence of the growth of the church, and which had suffered losses, was restricted to future employment as a pension fund only; and to meet the expenses of administrative government the principle of annual congregational assessments was established, to be subsequently applied to the work of home missions also. In 1893 the tendency to decentralization was further developed by Synod, in providing separate boards of trustees for the various educational institutions. Hitherto they had been administered by the Provincial Elders' Conference in its corporate capacity. The general supervision of the church in America still



remains with these boards of elders—in the North, since 1893, the Revs. Edward T. Kluge, Edmund A. Oerter, and Morris W. Leibert, with their treasurer, the Rev. Robert de Schweinitz, all of Bethlehem, Pa. ; and in the South, Bishop Edward Rondthaler, D.D., the Rev. James E. Hall, and N. S. Siewers, M.D., of Salem, N. C.

Though the history of the Indian missions in Canada, Kansas, and Indian Territory presents no striking features in recent times, the missionary spirit of the American Moravian Church was revived in a marked degree by the inauguration of a mission among the Eskimos of western Alaska, in response to an appeal addressed to the Society for Propagating the Gospel, at its annual meeting in Bethlehem in 1883, by the Rev. Sheldon Jackson, D.D., then a secretary of the Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church. The Rev. A. Hartmann, missionary at New Fairfield, in Ontario, and Mr. William Weinland, a student of the theological seminary, were sent on a tour of exploration next year. Via San Francisco and Ounalashka they proceeded to the mouth of the Nushagak and thence passed on to the Kuskoquim, up which they traveled for about one hundred and fifty miles in skin canoes, having as their interpreter an agent of the Alaska Commercial Company. It was territory absolutely unoccupied by any evangelical church. Hence on their return they recommended the founding of a station on the latter river. On July 14, 1885, the site of Bethel was selected by the Revs. W. H. Weinland and John H. Kilbuck, a full-blooded Indian, lineally descended from Delaware chiefs, whose ancestors had been converted in the Forks of the Delaware in Pennsylvania, himself as well as Weinland having completed a thorough classical and theological course. They and their wives were accompanied by Hans Torgersen, a practical carpenter, who went with them for temporary service in



connection with the erection of buildings. On August 10th Torgersen was accidentally drowned while sailing up the river with supplies, and the inexperienced young couples were left alone to secure shelter as best they could before the arctic winter set in, unable, moreover, to communicate intelligently with the natives. In the winter of 1886-87 Weinland's health so far failed that he, with his family, left Alaska; but in the summer of 1889 he was able to found a new mission among the Indians on the Banning Reserve in California.

For the first year after his return Kilbuck and his wife bravely maintained the post alone, and after the long and severe winter had the satisfaction of gaining the first convert the next Good Friday, when an old man exclaimed, "Koujanah! [Thanks!] We too desire to have our badness taken away by that blood." Nor was he the only one that was then won.

Mrs. Kilbuck's health becoming impaired by the great hardships, in the summer of 1889 Mrs. Bachman, wife of Bishop Henry T. Bachman, volunteered to give a year at Bethel. She was accompanied by Miss Carrie Detterer, who went out as a permanent laborer. In 1891 an official visit was paid to the Kuskokwim and the Nushagak by Bishop Bachman. In addition to the six American missionaries,<sup>1</sup> there were in 1893 two native assistants, two others who had received a partial education at Carlisle, Pa., and who will be employed for the industrial training of their countrymen, and about twenty-six communicants. At the filial stations of Kikichtagamute and Akaiaagamute the Christians were about to form a distinct village of their own. At Ougavigamute, the uppermost station, a mission house had been erected and a congregation of a

<sup>1</sup> Rev. John H. Kilbuck and wife, Rev. B. Helmich and wife, Miss Mary Mack, and Miss Philippine C. King.

dozen communicants gathered, in charge of the Rev. and Mrs. E. Weber. Schools are conducted here and at Bethel.

In the summer of 1886 the station of Carmel was founded at the mouth of the Nushagak and permanently occupied next year with the arrival of the Rev. Frank E. and Mrs. Wolff and Miss Mary Huber. In 1889 it was strengthened by the arrival of the Rev. J. H. Schoechert, whose wife, formerly Lydia Lebus, was previously a missionary at Bethel, and in 1890 by Miss Emma Huber. Here there is an industrial school with about twenty pupils and a congregation of about seventeen communicants.

Instead of weakening the interest of the American church in the missions at large which are the joint undertaking of the three home provinces of the Moravian Church, the Alaska mission, although supported exclusively by America, has served to deepen and intensify zeal for evangelization in all other parts. Nor has the life and vigor of the American Moravian congregations ever been more full of hope than at the present time.

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